

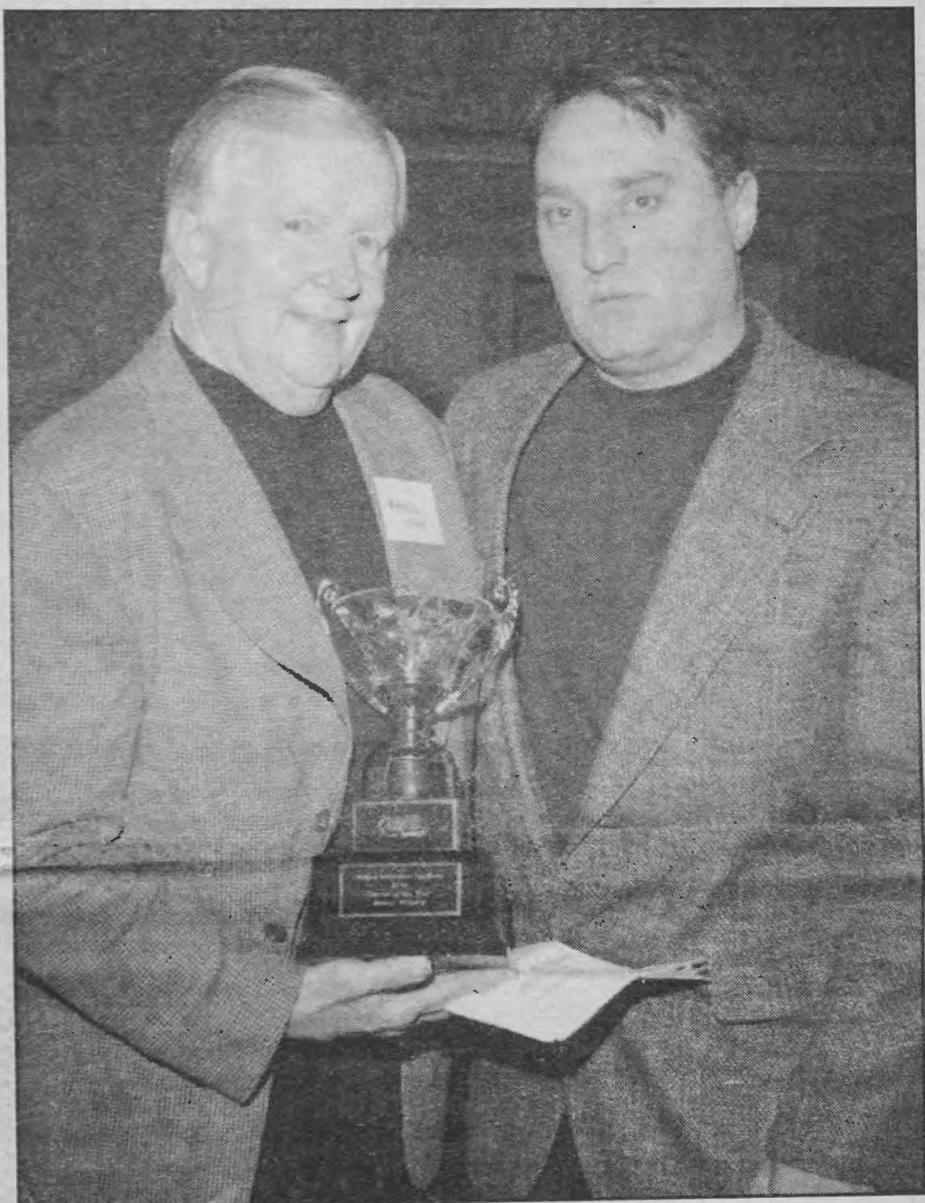


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## Champs Honored at MIS, LGR .....Page 2

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Madison (WI) International Speedway owner Terry Kunes (l) congratulates the track's 2004 Driver of the Year Bobby Wilberg during the Speedway's awards banquet on Saturday, February 5. **See Page 2.** (Doug Hornickel photo)



Lake Geneva Raceway presented its champions with awards Saturday night, January 30, at the speedway's annual banquet in Twin Lakes, WI. Recipients included (top row, l-r) Todd Miller, BICs; Dr. Ken Johnson, mini-modifieds; Jack Rubuch, super stocks; Vincent Merry; Midwest sport trucks; Curt Gnatzig, Legends; (bottom row, l-r) Brian Ulrich, Millennium late models; Jeremy Bloomberg, sportsman; Randy Rodgers and Denny Hiffman, late model co-drivers; and Michael Bilderback, Bandoleros. **See Page 2.** (C/D photo)



Danny Lasoski raced his Tony Stewart-owned winged 410 sprinter to two wins - including the \$10,000-to-win finale - during East Bay Raceway Park's Sprint Winternationals February 2-5 in Tampa, FL. **See Page 6.** (Neil Miller photo)



2004 Midwest Enduro Series champions (l-r) Darryl Traber (stock car) and Rod Brossart (small car) were honored at the Series' annual awards ceremonies Saturday, January 29, in Milwaukee, WI. **See Page 3.**

(Amanda LeBrun photo)

## MIS Banquet Honors Accomplishments of '04, Looks Ahead to '05

by John Wells

MADISON, WI, Feb. 5 -- The Concourse Hotel in downtown Madison was the site for the Madison International Speedway's racing banquet on Saturday, February 5. Over 300 people were in attendance for a banquet that not only recognized the many accomplishments of the 2004 season but also included a look to the future.

Scott Bleecker of Madison was honored as the top driver in the Midwest Truck Series. Bleecker earned five fast times, 12 top-fives and two victories en route to his first-ever track championship.

Runner-up honors went to Gary Cerny of Janesville, who notched three victories in 2004 - his first at MIS. Fred Oswald of Lake Mills took home the third-place trophy after finishing the season with one feature win. Also recognized were Garrett Goth of Cottage Grove, Todd Schmitz of Verona, John Wood of Sun Prairie, and Tom Meyers of Machesney Park, IL.

Goth was recognized as the division's rookie of the year, and Charlie Cottam of Janesville, the all-time feature leader in the series with 32 checkered flags, received a plaque for being selected "Favorite Driver" by the fans. A total of 14 drivers earned points in the Truck Series in 2004.

John Wood, a long-time competitor in the truck division, presented Series sponsor Gary Rockweiler with a gift in recognition for his support of both the Series and the Speedway.

Dale Nottestad topped off a very successful season in the super late model division by taking home top honors and joining an elite list of past champions. Nottestad finished the season with ten top-five finishes, four fast times and a division-high seven victories, including a remarkable five times in a row from July 31 until September 4. Nottestad now has 12 super late model victories at MIS to his credit, tying him for 14th on the all-time win list.

Finishing a mere 15 points behind Nottestad was Orfordville's Bobby Wilberg. Logging more laps than any other driver at MIS in 2004, Wilberg completed the season with a division-high eight fast times, 13 top-five finishes and two wins.

Receiving the third-place trophy was Andrew Morrissey of DeForest, whose season highlight was his establishment of a new track record, with a lap of 17.413 seconds set in April. Frank Nitzke of Berlin was also recognized for bringing two cars to Madison each week - one of three drivers who raced in two divisions per night. Wilberg was also recognized as the "Favorite Driver" by the fans in the division, which saw 78 drivers earn points in 2004.

The ASA late model division at Madison exceeded expectations in 2004, highlighted by very competitive racing and solid car counts. Capturing the track championship was 1995 super late model champion Ron Breese, Jr., of DeKalb, IL, driving for car owner Dave Bailey.



**MIS promoter Steve Einhaus (l) congratulates the track's Midwest Truck Series champion Scott Bleecker, while Series sponsor Gary Rockweiler and Speedway owner Terry Kunes join in the celebration during the track's recent banquet.**



**MIS promoter Steve Einhaus (l) and track owner Terry Kunes (r) present super late model champion Dale Nottestad with his trophy.**



**ASA late model champ Ron Breese, Jr. receives his trophy from MIS's Steve Einhaus and Terry Kunes. (Doug Hornickel photos)**

Breese led the division with six feature wins and 12 top-five and 14 top-ten finishes.

Bobby Wilberg of Orfordville, who pulled double duty each night, took home second-place honors. Wilberg finished with a division-high seven fast times and notched one victory in the division giving him 22 total career feature wins at MIS, in ASA and super late models and Midwest modifieds.

Bobby Weiss of Montello finished third despite not reaching victory lane, but his consistency put him in the top five on ten occasions. Rounding out the top ten in the division were Jared Ziegler, Adam Shackelford, Nick Schumacher, Jason Tyler, Nitzke, Jesse Saunders and Jeff Watters. Breese was also honored as the "Favorite Driver," as voted on by the fans, and the car of Bobby Weiss claimed the honor of "Best Appearing Car" for the 2004 season.

Breese was presented with a diecast replica of his car for winning the ASA late model "Hard Charger" award for 2004.

Track owner Terry Kunes reviewed the past season as well as looked ahead to 2005 in his statements to the crowd. He also presented several awards, including "Track Supporter" awards to Doug Hornickel and Jake Roth for all of their photographic and video work at MIS. Gary Rockweiler and John Matthews were recognized as "Sponsors of the Year," Bobby Wilberg as "Driver of the Year," Bob Schmelzer as "Employee of the Year," and Jim Steinke as "Fan of the Year" in other award presentations. Several drivers also received special recognition certificates, and Kunes thanked many track supporters and loyal employees for their support of MIS.

MIS promoter Steve Einhaus also addressed the group by outlining his goals for 2005 and unveiling a "very aggressive and ambitious" schedule. Einhaus highlighted changes in the Midwest Truck Series that will allow the Mid-American Super Truck Series to join the program, and three Mid-Am races and visits from the Wisconsin Challenge Series, Big Eight Limited Late Model Series, MARS series, HOSS sprints and Hooters Pro Cup late models were also mentioned. A fourth division, the Area Sportsman, will be joining the weekly program for 2005.

The 2005 racing season at Madison International Speedway opens on Sunday afternoon, May 1, when the Wisconsin Challenge Series and Big Eight Limited Late Model Series visit the paved half-mile. Weekly Friday night racing returns to MIS on May 6.

## LGR Honors Champs, Remembers Friends at '04 Awards Feast

by Dale R. Erdmann

TWIN LAKES, WI, Jan. 29 -- Rumpole's Banquet Hall was the scene of the 21st annual awards banquet for drivers that raced Friday and Saturday nights during the 2004 season at Lake Geneva Raceway. Some 247 drivers, families, friends, pit crew leaders and sponsors came to honor the champions of the season past.

LGR promoter Kevin Dawson told the crowd that over \$32,000 in cash and merchandise was handed out to the drivers who raced in 75 percent of all the track's completed shows, along with \$302,000 in purse payouts to the drivers.

Also as part of the program, those present remembered members of their racing family who left us in 2004, including Duane Sweeney, Mark "Tiny" Amborn and Charlie Doerr.

In the third season of Friday night "family fun" racing, the car count increased, while the crowd dropped down a little. Named as rookies of the year were Jerry Giuliano (mini-modifieds), Lisa Waterman (Basic International Cars), Michael Bilderback (legends cars) and Sonny Schoffen (millennium late models). In the Midwest sport trucks, Steven Johnson was honored as the most improved driver.

In the BICs, 18 drivers received points fund checks - the most for Friday night competition. Tenth through second places went to Roger Schultz, Reid Kahrs, Vladi Vladimirov, James Raderschadt, Leo Bujak, Andy Portzer, Rod Brossart, Lenny Adams and Bob Koch, and the champion was Todd Miller of Oak Creek.

In the mini-mods 12 drivers received money from the points fund. The top ten drivers, from bottom to top, were Chris Thomazin, John DeMay, Hermie Schultz, Giuliano, Phil Schultz, Andy Krueger, Curt Thomazin, Glen Vernezze and Mike Van Houten. Dr. Ken Johnson of Park Ridge, IL, was honored for his fifth division championship.

The legend cars saw eight drivers receive point fund monies. In ascending order they are Joe Scala, Lyle Kuklinski, Rob Duffek, Ernie Schaaf, Bilderback, Herman Greinig, and division runner-up and 2003 champion Steve Licht. The 2004 champion, Curt Gnatzig of Hartford, was then honored.

In their second season, the top five in the final Bandoleros standings received plaques. In fifth place was Bobby Yonke, while rookie Kyle Jusits, who finished 2004 ranked 19th nationally and was also the Wisconsin state champion. Ranking second in the nation for the group, with 16 wins, was third-place Kyle LaPier, and runner-up Michael Cootier also ranked in the top ten in the nation. Champion Michael Bilderback, of South Beloit, IL, won the last feature of the season at LGR by working the throttle cable with his hand after it had broken at the start of the race.

A special thanks went to Liz Bilderback, the group's representative.

In millennium late model racing, 11 drivers qualified for the points fund. Mark Hartline was tenth, while finishing ninth was 17-year-old rookie and third-generation driver Josh Wallace. Bill Hobson was eighth, while Joe Rusciano, who demolished his car with one week to go finished seventh. The only female driver in the group, Carrie Dyson, was sixth, 18-year-old Brad Kossow finished fifth, former super stock driver Schoffen claimed fourth, and the top three consisted of Keith Tolf, runner-up Paul Dyson and 2004 champion Brian Ulrich, a former late model competitor from Racine.

The Midwest sport trucks have a new president, Dale Gustum, who presented trophies and plaques to the top ten finishers. In fifth was Johnson, Todd Ross was fourth, third went to Chad Ross, the runner-up was Tom Ross, and Vincent Merry of Wadsworth, IL, collected his fourth championship.

Top Saturday night division rookies included Scott Norton (super stocks), Jamie Dorsey (sportsman) and Jacob Humphrey (super late models).

The super stocks had the highest amount of drivers to qualify for the points fund, with 16. The top ten, in descending order, were Ken Eisbrenner, Tom Roney, Scott Norton, Adam Mass, Shane Sapp, Adam Regnier, Bob Moeller, Mike Gunderson, runner-up and former champion John Janssen, and 2004 champion Jack Rubach of Burlington. Rubach gave an emotional speech, telling the crowd, "I miss my crew chief, but I especially miss my friend, Tiny." Rubach thanked everyone for their support during this trying season. Amborn was Rubach's crew chief.

The sportsman division had eight drivers receive points fund checks. The top ten drivers were rookie Jack Clark, Randy Schneider, Adam Berge, Rick Rowlett, Gary Norton, Erik Pierce, former champion Bobby Giers, Jamie Dorsey, runner-up Kenny Joosten and 2004 champion Jeremy Bloomberg, a former enduro racer.

Thirteen super late model drivers shared points fund money. Mike Simon, Jr., was tenth, preceded by two-division racer Vincent Merry, Brandon Hill (who picked up his first career feature win this year), Jerry Cowan, Rick Corso (who missed six shows), Kent Burkoth, Eddie May (who had the most feature wins), 17-year-old former champion Jacob Humphrey, runner-up and second-generation driver Jason Hicks, and 2004 champion Randy Rodgers of Elkhorn, who along with co-driver Denny Hiffman, took the crown by a 35-point margin.

Drivers in the two-season-old Midwest Sportsman Championship Series received their trophies. Fifth place went to Bobby Giers, Josh Bauer was fourth, John Senerchia took third, the runner-up was James Swan, and defending champion Jeremy Miller was crowned the champion again, finishing with a five-point margin. Drivers in the MSCS raced at LGR and Slinger in six shows. The idea for the series started with LGR director of competition Eric Dawson, and Natasha Fabian signed on to care of the points and act as publicist for the series.

### Correction --

In the January 19 issue of CFRN, captions under photos of Dale Prunty and Dave Feiler in Fay Hendricks' 'Round & Around' column were switched.

CFRN regrets the error.

## Hot Laps

### Rhonda Hatton Stricken

by Bob Cruse

ROSCOE, IL, Feb. 3 -- Rhonda Hatton, 41, wife of 2004 Badger Midget Series champion Scott Hatton, is now home recovering from a stroke she suffered while flying home from the 2005 International Midget World Series in Auckland, New Zealand.

Driving the midget in which he won the '04 BMARA championship, Scott Hatton won the International Midget World Series individual championship on January 22 at Western Springs Speedway in Auckland, NZ. Rhonda suffered the stroke on the flight home and was hospitalized for about a week.

She is now home and her condition is improving, but she continues to be weak and tired and is suffering from vision problems associated with the stroke. Well wishers may write to her at 6915 Skyview Tr., Roscoe, IL 61073-8013.

### Lettow to ASL Chair Competition Committee

BAILEYS HARBOR, WI -- Veteran race car crew chief Howie Lettow has been named chairman of the competition committee for the newly-organized American Stockcar League. The series is being formed by former ASA National Touring Series car owners and will be run under the sanction of the Mid-American Stock Car Series, Inc., of Baileys Harbor.

"Howie Lettow has been around these cars for many years and is very respected in the racing industry," stated Mid-Am Series owner Gary Vercauteran. "I am delighted he has accepted this position. Lettow and his committee will recommend individuals to be hired as technical inspectors for the new series."

A schedule of approximately ten races is anticipated on paved tracks.

In addition, Mike Lemke has been named overall competition and safety director for all five of the Mid-American Stock Car Series divisions, which also includes Mid-Am super trucks, classic stock cars, Mid-American stock cars and Midwest AllStar Racing Series late models. Lemke will continue to serve as competition director for the late model division.

For information about any of the divisions, call the series office at (920) 823-2856.

### Shoestring Racing Issues Comments Regarding Show

WEST ALLIS, WI -- Shoestring Racing, which promoted the recent Wisconsin Racers Swap Meet at State Fair Park, has issued a statement outlining several issues that came about during the show.

In its statement Shoestring Racing expressed its appreciation to what was a strong turnout of race fans for the event, then addressed several issues that it classified as normal for a "first-time promotion," emphasizing that several of the more significant concerns were beyond the control of Shoestring Racing.

Fans were informed that admission to the show was free, by either the State Fair Park's parking staff or Information phone line; this was incorrect. The "free admission" information was also stated on State Fair Park's website; that was rectified back in December by State Fair Park, but nowhere else. Shoestring Racing was apologized to for this by the State Fair Park staff after the fact.

Complaints about the concession stand service (with only one person working in it) and parking were also heard by Shoestring Racing management, but both were under the direction of State Fair Park, either by contract or subcontract, according to Shoestring Racing's statement.

In concluding its statement, Shoestring Racing extends an apology to all that were affected by these issues.

### Chicagoland Show Offers Memorabilia, Collectibles

HOMWOOD, IL -- Helping to signal the beginning of the auto racing season in these parts, the 14th annual Chicagoland Auto Racing Memorabilia and Collectibles Show will take place at the Ramada Inn Homewood Hotel on Sunday, March 13.

Vendors from throughout the Midwest will offer area race fans a wide variety of auto racing memorabilia and collectibles. The show will feature photos, plastic models, speedway programs and yearbooks, newspapers, magazines, die-cast cars, trading cards and much more.

In addition, the event has become a meeting place for numerous former area racing drivers and champions to gather and talk about the "good old days of racing" with fellow former competitors and long-time fans - even signing an autograph or two.

The show will run from 9 am-2 pm. Children ages 12 and under will be admitted free. The Ramada Inn Homewood Hotel is located at 17400 S. Halsted Street, just a quarter-mile south of Interstate 80/294. For more information, call (219) 838-0737 or (219) 923-1475.

### USG, Kenseth Ink Sponsor Pact

CONCORD, NC, Jan. 26 -- USG Corporation, a leading manufacturer of building materials, announced that its 2005 NASCAR program will include a new partnership with DeWalt Racing, Roush Racing and champion driver Matt Kenseth.

USG Sheetrock Brand will be a primary sponsor on Kenseth's NASCAR Nextel Cup car at three races - February 27 at Fontana, CA; August 7 at Indianapolis, and October 30 at Atlanta. At all of the other 2005 Cup races, USG Sheetrock will assume a major associate sponsorship role on the car, owned by Roush Racing.

Since joining the Cup Series full-time in 2000, Kenseth, the 2003 NASCAR champion, has accumulated nine wins and 39 top-five and 82 top-ten finishes. The 32-year-old Cambridge, WI, native put together top-ten championship points finishes in each of the past three years.

## Midwest Enduro Series Honors Traber, Brossart at Tenth Awards Banquet

MILWAUKEE, WI, January 29 -- The Midwest Enduro Stock Car Series held its tenth annual awards banquet in the Grand Ballroom of the Clarion Hotel in Milwaukee on Saturday, January 29, and over 230 attended the formal event to honor 2004 Series champion Darryl Traber and Midwest Enduro Small Car Series champion Rod Brossart.

The top 30 drivers in the final Series point standings were recognized, as well as the top ten drivers in the Small Car Series. Special achievement awards were also presented during the ceremonies.

The 2004 Midwest Enduro title was the third of his Series career for Traber, adding to those in 1990 and 2000. Traber's consistency was the key to his success, as he collected five wins in 2004, tying the Series-best single-season mark set by Mario Stella, and highlighted by his overall win at the Lake Geneva Raceway Labor Day event, run in honor of Mark "Tiny" Amborn.

A championship crew chief award was presented to Don Mason, and the chief scorer award was presented to Jason Traber. Additional crew chief awards were presented to championship team crew members Brent Mason, Nan DeLany, David Traber, Dale Traber and Brian Traber.

The top five finishers each received trophies and prize monies along, and plaque awards were distributed to their respective crew chiefs and scorers. Along with Traber, the top five also included runner-up Tracy Carr, the third-place team of Aaron Wilke and Jeff Sayler, fourth-finishing Pat Kinjerski and fifth-place David Donahue. Those finishing sixth through 30th were also presented plaque awards, and the top 25 in



Co-emcee Mike Babicz addresses the crowd during the opening ceremonies of the Midwest Enduro Stock Car Series' tenth annual awards banquet. In the background are Series promoter Darryl Traber and co-emcees Erich Iversen and Eric Mueller.

attendance received prize money as well.

The inaugural Small Car Series champion was no surprise, as Brossart was also the 2003 Midwest Enduro BIC Car Challenge champion. A convincing win in the final event of the season capped his championship season.

The top ten finishers in the Small Car Series were also honored with plaque awards, and those in attendance also received prize money. The 2004 runner-up was Steve Bayer, and he was followed by Tony Riek, Mike McKay, Todd Lunsford, Darwin Niemczyk, Mike Haugan, Art Speciale, Valerie Epright and Jack Rabey.

Special achievement awards were distributed to Al Kuphal, Steve Just, Ricky

Nelson, Russ Koralewski, Pete Aschenbrenner, the Lunsford racing team and the Pinkalla race team.

The 2004 Chuck's Radiator "rookie of the year" award was presented to Pat Kinjerski, the 2004 Sharlene's Child Care "most improved driver" award was presented to Robert Nuti, the T.A. Express, Inc. "Hard Charger" award was presented to Mike Herwald, and the fifth annual Erich Iversen, Sr., "Good Buddy" award was presented to Jared Pinkalla.

The 2005 Midwest Enduro Stock Car Series schedule will be announced by mid-February. For further details or Series information, call (262) 895-6682 from 5-9 pm weekdays.



The 2004 Midwest Enduro Stock Car Series "Special Recognition" awards were given to (l-r) members of the Pinkalla Racing Team, Steve Just, Al Kuphal, Pete Aschenbrenner, Russ Koralewski, and Don Lunsford, representing the Lunsford Racing Team. (Amanda LeBrun photos)

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<b>SUNDAY - OCTOBER 9</b> Wisconsin Late Models (100-Lap Main) Plus Support Divisions



Luxemburg Speedway crowned its 2004 champions during its February 5: (l-r) Tyler Smith (sport fours); Shawn Kilgore (IMCA stock cars); Scott Mullen (IMCA modifieds); and Keith Kickbush (IMCA hobby stocks). (John Garniss photo)

## Luxemburg Speedway Crowns 2004 Champions

NUEREN, WI, Feb. 5 -- More than 300 drivers, race officials and fans took part in the 2004 Luxemburg Speedway awards banquet at Rendezvous Pleasure Palace in Nueren Saturday night.

Seymour's Scott Mullen captured his first-ever IMCA modified track championship. A model of consistency all season long, Mullen escaped brother Brian's shadow with numerous top-five finishes, including a Labor Day weekend victory. Scott Mullen beat out Algoma's Jeremy Jacobs by 16 points.

Kewaunee's Shawn Kilgore had the best season of his young career. The IMCA stock car ace scored seven feature wins en route to the division title, beating out Rod Snellenberger of Pulaski by nine points. Highlighting Kilgore's season was a mid-season victory in Iowa, while he scored 12 total wins on area tracks in 2004.

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## New Format Slated for 36th Oktoberfest Weekend

WEST SALEM, WI -- Officials of the LaCrosse Fairgrounds Speedway have announced that the 36th annual Oktoberfest Race Weekend, to be held October 6-9, will be run under a new format.

The Friday, Saturday and Sunday portions of the four-day event will see the most dramatic changes. The new format for Friday, October 7, will see the ASA late models highlight that day's action. In addition to the other support divisions, the ASA late models will run their final event of the 2005 season, a 100-lap main event.

On Saturday, October 8, events will include several support divisions and will feature the NASCAR Midwest Touring Series cars. The touring cars will compete in their final event of the 2005 season, a 200-lap main event.

On Sunday, October 9, the schedule will include a 100-lap main event for the Wisconsin

late models, in addition to several support divisions. The Thursday, October 6, events will remain the same, with the LaCrosse Sportsman and other support divisions.

"We knew it was time for a change," stated Speedway promotions director Dave Noelke. "With all the popular tours that run in the Midwest, we wanted to give the fans a "new" Oktoberfest Race Weekend that would include them. It should be a very exciting weekend of racing for both the fans and competitors."

Fifteen different classes are slated to compete over the four-day event. Speedway officials and Tour directors are still working out the final details. "We are fired up about this new format and wanted to get this great news out as soon as possible," added Noelke.

For more information about the 36th annual Oktoberfest Race Weekend, contact the Speedway at (608) 786-1525.



The traditional huge crowds that gather for the annual Oktoberfest Race Weekend at LaCrosse Fairgrounds Speedway will see a change in the programs format in 2005.

(submitted photo)

## EWSC Drops Prices in Move to Expo; Adds New Division

MANITOWOC, WI -- Less than one month after the Eastern Wisconsin Stock Car Association accepted a contract from the Manitowoc Expo Raceway to move its 45-year-old race program to the Manitowoc track, the EWSC Board of Directors recently voted to reduce grandstand admission prices for the 2005 season.

In 2005 an adult admission ticket for the over 100-car Saturday night program will cost seven dollars, down from nine dollars last season. "With the growing number of race programs and some great opportunities for (EWSC) at Manitowoc, we felt it was right to lower the admission prices for the fans," according to an EWSC Board statement. "With the lower prices for adults and student tickets and the EWSC Junior Fan Club for younger fans, EWSC looks forward to families being able to afford a great night of racing in Manitowoc."

Kids ages 12 and younger will continue to be invited to join the Junior Fan Club for ten dollars and will receive many benefits, including free admission to all EWSC race programs.

In another Board decision, EWSC has reformatting the All-American Mighty Fours race program by adding heat races and a nightly payoff for the drivers. This division, started at EWSC in 2001 as a true entry-level division, has seen tremendous growth over the last four seasons. "We felt by adding more track time and pay to the division, this division would con-

tinue to grow and become a springboard for new drivers to race with the EWSC," reasoned the EWSC Board in its statement.

Responding to a growing demand from local racers, EWSC also has added a new entry-level division to its Saturday night format. The new division will be titled the "Eastern Eights" and will be based around cars driven in local Challenge and hobby stock divisions.

As EWSC works to finalize the 2005 schedule, the Manitowoc Expo fair board and the club have agreed to add Wednesday, August 24, to the race schedule, during the Manitowoc County Fair.

To begin the inaugural EWSC season at Manitowoc, EWSC will host a "kick-off" event on Saturday, April 30, with an open practice for racers to test their cars; the grandstands will be open at no charge to fans. Also throughout the day, the club will host a car show and brat fry behind the grandstands, and later music will be provided for dancing and entertainment. The EWSC season opener is scheduled for the following Saturday night, May 7.

For more information, EWSC hosts a membership meeting open to the public on the second Monday of every month at 8 pm at the S & R Bar and Restaurant, east of Plymouth on Highway C. The next membership meeting will be on Monday, February 14, and 2005 rulebooks, brat fry tickets, memberships, season passes, tentative schedules and car number sign-up will be available at this meeting.

## Baltes Book Signing Planned During RPM Workshops

GREEN LAKE, WI -- Earl Baltes, builder and promoter of Ohio's Eldora Speedway and former *Racing Promotion Monthly* Auto Racing Promoter of the Year, plans to sign his newly released autobiographical book, "Earl!!" written with motorsports journalist and author Dave Argabright, on Thursday and Friday, February 10-11, during the 32nd RPM Promoters Workshop in Lake Mary, FL.

The signing, based on the projected release date of the book, is subject to change. Baltes, who retired from promoting in 2004 after selling Eldora Speedway to NASCAR driver Tony Stewart, received four Regional Promoter of the Year nominations and the industry's highest award in 1993.

Argabright, who specializes in writing about motorsports, is a contributor to several national racing and automotive trade papers and magazines and does nationally televised broadcasting work as well. His many professional honors include the "Outstanding Contribution to the Sport" award from the National Sprint Car Poll and the "Frank Blunk Award for Journalism" from the Eastern Motorsports Press Association. Argabright has authored hundreds of auto racing columns and short stories as well as three other books about racing and its personalities: "Hewitt's Law" with Jack Hewitt, "Still Wide Open" with Brad Doty, and "American Scene."

More information is available from RPM at (920) 294-0830.

## Hatton Wins, but Kiwis Top Midget Series

by Dean McLachlan

WESTERN SPRINGS, New Zealand, Jan. 22 -- New Zealand took overall honors in the four-test Springs Speedway World Midget Series, but it was American Scott Hatton who scorched to the individual prize at Western Springs.

The Illinois native celebrated his 41st birthday with a commanding win in the prestigious 50-lap feature, just two days after winning the second biggest race of the season, a 30-lap feature.

Hatton started from second on the grid but passed Kiwi hope Michael Pickens in lapped traffic ten laps into the race. The race restarted after accidents six times, but on each occasion Hatton not only fended off the challengers - he buried them.

Pickens held on for second, and defending champion Bryce Townsend drove brilliantly to finish third from 21st - incredibly, in a borrowed car. American Davey Ray also rocked the field by finishing sixth from 25th on the grid.

Almost half the 25-car field retired during the grueling race, and the USA's Cory Kruseman accounted for three of them when the exhaust system fell off his car; Carl Worboys and Matt Thompson damaged their cars running over the debris, while Kruseman was subsequently ordered from the track for exceeding noise limits.

In the test series the Americans, with 54 points, cleaned up Australia (45) and New Zealand (43) on the night, but they didn't score enough points to stop the Kiwis from taking overall honors. The home team, on 416 points, finished just ten points clear of the Americans (406), with Australia well back (327).

In the individual stakes Hatton not only won the top two races of the season, but



Scott Hatton won the 2005 International Midget World Series January 21 in Auckland, NZ. Hatton, shown racing at Angell Park Speedway in August 2004, was the 2004 Badger Midget Series champion; this is the same car with which he won in New Zealand. (Bob Cruse photo)

he was also the most consistent driver during the four-test series. The former Chili Bowl champion and current Badger Series champ said his week in New Zealand was a career highlight.

"It doesn't get any better," Hatton said. "It's unbelievable that we've come down here and done so well given the standard of the competition."

The speedway season at Western Springs has now come to a premature close, with the last five meetings of the season cancelled. The focus now shifts to court proceedings, with a High Court

hearing in approximately three months - time hopefully set to resolve the issue of noise limits at the venue.

Spring Speedway promoter Dave Stewart said he was thrilled to have such a fantastic night of racing to complete the season.

### RESULTS

Individual Points: Scott Hatton, USA (131); Shaun Insley, NZ (118); Michael Kendall, NZ (116).

Feature: Scott Hatton (USA); Michael Pickens (NZ); Bryce Townsend (NZ); Michael Kendall (NZ); Shaun Insley (NZ); Davey Ray (USA); Steven Currie (NZ); Dave Darland (USA); Scott Buckley (NZ); Lance Beale (NZ).

## Alaska Phenom to Wheel Sprinter on IRA Tour

by Paul Pittman

STEVENS POINT, WI, Jan. 22 -- Brian Coleman is spending his Wisconsin winter off-season nursing a busted rib, which he suffered in his shop working on his race car. But Brian is resting easy and has time to heal.

Coleman has a new driver for his number 4 outlaw winged 410 sprint car in 2005 - Billy Balog - and the team's plan is to run as much of the Interstate Racing Association's '05 schedule as possible.

Balog's name is new to racing in the Midwest. That's because he hails from the thriving racing community of Fairbanks - Alaska! Billy's father Bruce is from Barron, WI, and had turned his share of laps around Rice Lake and other western Wisconsin venues, which explains how a guy from Alaska would find his way into the seat of a sprint car.

Billy got his first taste behind the wheel in 2000 in the GFRA Sprint Series in Alaska, where he set a new track record and earned a championship in the 360 division. The 2001 season saw a runner-up finish in the Alaska State Shoot-Out Series. In 2002 Billy changed directions and found himself behind the wheel of an asphalt late model, where he finished the season with the most trips to victory lane at the Palmer, AK, facility.

Over the past two seasons Billy headed south to Washington state, where he wheeled a late model for Dan Cunningham. But he never forgot his roots and brought his sprint car with him, racing in approximately eight events each season.

Enter Jimmy Vilz. Vilz is a friend of Billy's father in Barron; he is also a good friend of Brian Coleman and knew that Coleman was still looking for someone to grow with his race team. Just how Vilz talked a car owner from Wisconsin into hiring a driver from Alaska is unclear, but whatever was said worked.

In the month before Thanksgiving 2004, Billy Balog drove from Washington



Brian Coleman's new car, which was purchased from IRA champ Scott Neitzel, is ready to race. Coleman has employed the services of Billy Balog, a former resident of Fairbanks, AK, to turn the wheel for 2005. The team plans to run a majority of the 2005 IRA schedule with several chassis and motors to work with. (Linda Worden photo)

to Alaska where he packed up his belongings, then drove back to Washington, gathered the balance of his racing shop and headed east to Wisconsin. "You should have seen it," commented Billy on the drive. "It was something. I gave all my old tires and stuff that I knew I wouldn't need to my buddies up in Alaska, since freight bills are so high to have anything shipped up there at all. My brother-in-law and I loaded up my one (race) car on my open trailer, sat the other chassis in the tire rack and hit the road." After a slight silence, followed by a laugh, Billy continued, "I guess I should have taken a picture, but we just wanted to get to Wisconsin."

Billy didn't just come to Wisconsin to race. An accomplished heavy-duty truck mechanic, Billy's abilities were quickly tapped by a shop in nearby Cameron, WI. "This is great," said Billy. "Brian and his family have been so good to me already; we are already starting to act like a big family. This is going to be new and take some time. The 410s will be a new experience for me, but I am looking forward to it. I have heard so much about the area, and now I am getting a chance to be a part of it.

"We are all looking forward to the upcoming season. I feel comfortable in a sprint car and am so grateful for this opportunity."

Becoming a part of the Coleman family has had its moments. "We ordered a brand new seat for the car and Billy," stated Brian, "and Billy has been chomping at the bit for over a month to get that new seat. Well, it arrived the other day, so we had to

### CLS Awards Fest Set for March 12

NEW RICHMOND, WI -- The Cedar Lake Speedway will hold its annual awards banquet on Saturday, March 12, at the Grand Casino in Hinckley, MN.

Social hour begins at 4 pm with a buffet dinner starting at 5:30 and awards and entertainment to follow. Tickets are available until March 2 by calling (612) 363-0479.

The top ten drivers in each division will be recognized and trophies and/or point checks. Other awards will include perfect attendance, passing points, rookies of the year and the Speedway's annual gag awards.

A block of rooms has been set aside at the Hinckley Grand Casino; mention the Cedar Lake Speedway banquet when making your room reservation to receive the discounted rate.

## Menard Wins Florida Speedfest

LAKELAND, FL, Jan. 29 -- Charlie Menard of Eau Claire, WI, took the lead on lap 134 from Georgia driver Bubba Pollard and never looked back in winning the SpeedFest 200 at the 3/4-mile USA International Speedway Saturday night.

Northern drivers captured the top four spots in the unique "north-south" shootout which featured drivers representing five traveling series.

Eddie Hoffman of Wheaton, IL, finished second, followed by Pat Kelly of Morris, IL, and Mike Rowe of Turner, ME. The top Florida finisher was Jay Middleton of Lake City.

Menard, the 2004 LaCrosse (WI) Fairgrounds Speedway late model champion and regional titlist, and Hoffman have both indicated they will be racing during the Oktoberfest Race Weekend October 6-9 at LaCrosse.

### RESULTS

1-10: Charlie Menard (WI), Eddie Hoffman (IL), Pat Kelly (IL), Mike Rowe (ME), Jay Middleton (FL), Justin Drawdy (FL), Ted Christopher (CT), Travis Kittleson (FL), Chuck Barnes (KY), Wayne Anderson (FL)

## New Limited LM Series Announced

ROCKFORD, IL, January 27 -- Officials have announced the formation of the Big 8 Limited Late Model Series in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

The eight-race series will open on April 2, highlighting the Saturday night portion of the 28th annual Spring Classic at Rockford Speedway with a 58-lap contest. The top 16 qualifiers will automatically advance to a 24-car feature starting field that pays \$1,000 to win and \$150 to start.

"We feel this format, along with our inversion process of five plus the roll of the die, will provide both drivers and fans with great racing action," commented Series race director Tom Powell. Twenty-eight teams competed during the inaugural Big 8 event last fall at Rockford.

Madison (WI) International Speedway will host the second stop on the series, on Sunday afternoon, May 1, along with a second visit to be announced. Completing the Big 8 Limited Late Model Series season will be the 40th National Short Track Championship at Rockford on Friday, September 23, while the Series champion will be crowned during the Oktoberfest Race Weekend at LaCrosse (WI) Fairgrounds Speedway on October 6-9.

Additional dates are currently being confirmed with tracks across the region.

Based on area limited late model rules, cars will be allowed to run a 10.8:1 compression engine with a Holley 4412 carburetor at a minimum weight of 2,800 lbs, with a 42-percent right-side bias. All races will be run on Goodyear D2562 and D2563 tires.

Big 8 Series technical director Greg Folk added, "Our goal is to unify limited late model rules and provide these drivers an opportunity to travel to some of the best area tracks."

Participants, tracks or sponsors interested in the Big 8 Limited Late Model Series are invited to call Gregg McKarns at (815) 633-1500. Entries for the opening event will hit mailboxes in early March.



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# Kemenah is Sixth Different 'King of 360s'

TAMPA, FL, Jan. 29 -- Chad Kemenah posed in victory lane wearing the crown that designated him as the sixth different winner of the 'King' of the 360 Winternationals at East Bay Raceway Park. Since 2002, the \$10,000-to-win race has also served as the fourth annual Ronald Laney Memorial.

Kemenah's winning move under Gary Wright came late in the 40-lap finale. Kemenah watched leader Wright try to out-guess two lapped cars struggling to hold their line, and when Wright went high to clear Mike Brecht, Kemenah went low and took the lead on lap 37.

Kemenah and Wright were on the front row at the start, and on the initial lap Wright charged into the lead. By lap 3 Wright stretched his lead over Danny Martin, Jr., to five car-lengths, with Kemenah an equal distance back in third.

Heavy lapped traffic was a factor by lap 5, as Wright put three cars between himself and Martin. On lap 7 Greg Leonard spun after checking up to avoid another car.

By lap 13 Wright had five lapped cars as a cushion when the first yellow came out on lap 19 for Greg Leonard's spin. Kemenah was now running second but was four lengths back of Wright by lap 25. On the next lap Wright bounced out a groove and Kemenah closed, but Kenny Adams actually passed Kemenah for second; the pass was wiped away when Jesse Giannetto's car lost power in front of Wright, who actually hit the wall trying to avoid Giannetto.

When racing resumed Wright led Kemenah and Adams until they caught the back of the field, and Kemenah used that traffic to surge in front on lap 37.

## Leonard Wins on 360s Night 2 at East Bay

TAMPA, FL, Jan. 27 -- Greg Leonard after led all 25 laps of the second preliminary night of the four-day seventh annual 360 Winternationals at East Bay Raceway Park Thursday night.

After an early yellow on lap 2, Leonard dived through traffic for the next 21 laps, chased by Danny Martin, Terry McCarl and Gary Wright.

After timing 12th, Leonard started on pole after two faster cars were unable to make it past the C-main and four other cars who timed faster had to run the "B". Leonard showed the way the entire distance despite a yellow flag with two laps to go.

The only drama was to see if second-place Martin, suffering with a bent front wing, could catch him. But on the last lap Martin pulled a wheel-

ie because of his lack of front-end downforce and lost his spot when McCarl and Wright zipped by. Zach Chappell and Kenny Adams rounded out the top five.

It was the second "big-time" win for Leonard within the last three months here driving for car owner and driver Tom Winegardner, Sr. After Winegardner had open-heart surgery this past summer, he picked the 22-year-old Leonard to get behind the wheel of his car.

The winner of the Strawberry Dash was Mike Schroeder, and the 20-lap mini-sprint winner was Duane Harbaugh.

### RESULTS

360 SPRINTS Qualifying: Kenny Adams, 13.364 secs.

Heat 1: Tony Bruce, Jr., Glenn Styers, Zach Chappell.

Heat 2: Chad Layton, Gary

## IRA Readies for 2005 Season

MCHENRY, IL -- Plans are in the final stages for what looks to be a banner year for the IRA Outlaw Sprint Series.

Series title sponsor Bumper to Bumper Auto Parts will continue its support and has increased its contribution toward what should be a Series-record points fund. Also, long-time supporter United Trailers is also returning as an associate Series sponsor.

The 2005 Series schedule will be formally released soon, as a few late dates are yet to be fit in logically for the regional traveling series. However, some event dates have been finalized.

IRA has announced that WISSOTA's 2004 "Track of the Year," the Deer Creek Speedway in Spring Valley, MN, will host the Series for the first time, on June 25. Freeport (IL) Raceway Park also reappears on this year's IRA calendar, after a five-year absence.

Main-stay IRA venues such as the Dodge County Fairgrounds in Beaver Dam, WI; Sheboygan (WI) County Fair Park, Wilmot (WI) Speedway, Cedar Lake Speedway in New Richmond, WI; Superior (WI) Speedway, Grant County (WI) Speedway, Langlade County (WI) Speedway, The Raceway at Powercom Park in Beaver Dam, WI; the Powercom Speedzone in Oshkosh, WI; and the Red Cedar Speedway in Menomonie, WI, have all locked in dates on the Series schedule, while Iowa's Knoxville Raceway, Cresco Speedway and Echo Valley Speedway also have dates secured.

Several other facilities remain in the mix, including a pair in Michigan, but scheduling logistics are still being worked out.

The IRA has traditionally presented one of the highest member-supported car counts per event in winged 410 sprint car racing, and that is expected to continue in 2005. Current IRA champion Scotty Neitzel will defend his title, while former



Greg Leonard dominated all 25 laps of the second A-main of the 360 Winternationals in Tampa, FL, on January 27.

(Neil Miller photo)

Wright, Branson Maeschen.

Heat 3: Paul Sides, Terry McCarl, Kyle Patrick.

Heat 4: Greg Leonard, Mike Becht, Wayne Johnson.

C Main: Tighe Schloss, Mike Chad, Cody Geldart.

B Main: Geldart, Chad Kemenah, Chad.

A Main: Leonard, McCarl, Wright, Danny Martin, Jr., Chappell, Adams, Chad, Kemenah, Johnson, Kelly.

Kinser.

Dash: Mike Schroeder, Danny Jones, Nick Fratto.

MINI-SPRINTS

Heat Winners: George Ulmer; Duane Harbaugh.

Feature: Harbaugh, Jim

Brookens, Ron Taggart, Ulmer, John Craddock, Jim Young, Eddie Moss, Jr., Ralf Herrero, James Fairfield, Jason Brown.

Chad Kemenah takes the win in the "King of the 360s" Winternationals A-main at East Bay Raceway Park (Neil Miller photo)



Gary Wright collected the make-up 360 sprint feature at East Bay Raceway Park in Florida on Saturday, January 29. (Neil Miller photo)

## Wright Wins 360 Winternat's Make-Up

TAMPA, FL, Jan. 29 -- Gary Wright worked hard to win the 20-lap make-up 360 sprint race on Saturday afternoon, after Friday night's entire program was rained out, at East Bay Raceway Park.

As the third-mile clay surface took rubber quickly in the feature, the tall Texan finished with a right-rear tire that was down to the cords. Starting third in a field of 24 cars, he took the lead on lap 9 and became the third different winner in the seventh annual King of 360s preliminary events.

The race distance was shortened from 25 to 20 laps when it was determined that there were not enough of the harder Hoosier 55 tires for the starting field; Hoosier F-35s were then required for the right-rear.

On the initial green there was a three-car incident, including flips by Kyle Patrick and Cody Geldart. All drivers were okay, and after one lap was recorded Jesse Giannetto lost power. On the restart Greg Wilson led Wright for six laps before catching the back of the field on lap 8.

But as Wilson's car developed a push, Wright got by him on lap 9. Then after the last yellow on lap 11 for debris, Wright built a six car-length lead by lap 13. Carefully working around lapped cars, Wright finished four seconds ahead of Wilson, with Kenny Adams, Jason Sides and Trevor Lewis also pulling off top-five finishes.

Chad Kemenah set fast time over the 41-car field. The Strawberry Dash was scratched from the program due to time constraints.

### RESULTS

360 SPRINTS Qualifying: Chad Kemenah, 13.033 secs.

Heat 1: Wayne Johnson, Greg Wilson, Kemenah.

Heat 2: Cody Geldart, Danny Martin, Jr., Gary Wright.

Heat 3: Kenny Adams, Trevor Lewis, Tony Bruce, Jr.

Heat 4: Kelly Kinser, Chad Layton, Terry McCarl.

B Main: Jason Sides, Darren Stewart, Ricky Stenhouse, Jr.

A Main: Wright, Wilson, Adams, J. Sides, Lewis, Zach Chappell, Kemenah, Stewart, Paul Sides, Johnson.

MINI-SPRINTS

Heat Winners: Michael Dicely, Duane Harbaugh.

Feature: Dicely, Darryl Wills, Derek King, John Craddock, Ron Taggart, Jim Brookens, Jesse Teed, Harbaugh, George Ulmer, Jim Young.

## Martin Wins 360 Sprint Winternationals Opener

TAMPA, FL, Jan. 26 -- An excited Danny Martin, Jr., went to victory lane at his home track during the opening night of the seventh annual King of 360s Winternationals at East Bay Raceway Park Wednesday night.

Martin timed in 12th fastest of 47 entries, but five faster timers failed to transfer to the A-main from their heats, and after the inversion he was on the pole.

Martin instantly pulled to a three-second lead by lap 3 over Darren Stewart. He was on the heels of the back of the field by lap 5 and had put Johnny Gilbertson down a lap just as the first yellow came out for two multi-car tangles.

Martin continued his dominance by using the high groove, but on lap 18 he was



Danny Martin, Jr. (00) negotiates his way by Kenny Adams (4) during the opening round of the East Bay Raceway Park 360 Winternationals in Tampa, FL.

(Neil Miller photo)

Kemenah, Mike Becht, Greg Leonard, Adams, Layton, Wilson.

Dash: Cody Geldart, Brian Maddox, Daryl Smith.

MINI-SPRINTS

Heat Winners: Eddie Moss, Jr., Stewart, Ricky Stenhouse, Jr.

Martin held on for fourth, followed by Terry McCarl.

Daryl Smith won the Strawberry Dash.

### RESULTS

360 SPRINTS Heat 1: Zach Chappell, Chad Layton, Darren Stewart.

Heat 2: Kelly Kinser, Mike Chad, Tony Bruce, Jr.

Heat 3: Terry McCarl, Ricky Stenhouse, Jr., Mike Brecht.

Heat 4: Paul Sides, Wayne Johnson, Jason Sides.

B Main: Cody Geldart, Jesse Giannetto, Trevor Lewis.

A Main: Chad Kemenah, Gary Wright, Kenny Adams, Danny Martin, Jr., McCarl, J. Sides, Chappell, Johnson, Stenhouse, Kinser.

Dash: Daryl Smith, Jack Pillon, Glenn Styres.

### MINI-SPRINTS

Heat Winners: Ron Taggart; Michael Dicely.

Feature: Jim Brookens, Darryl Wills, Derek King, Dicely, Taggart, Jim Young, George Ulmer, John Craddock, Paul Gottschalk, Randy Carrier.



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## RK Promotions Changes WIR Race Date

by Kevin Kenseth

CAMBRIDGE, WI, January 25 — Roy Kenseth, owner of RK Race Promotions, has announced that the date for the DeWalt All-Star Challenge at Wisconsin International Raceway in Kaukauna has been changed to Tuesday, June 21. It will still be a Wisconsin Challenge Series-sanctioned event. The change was made to avoid a conflict with another super late model special in Wisconsin.

"My goal with this show is for the fans in the Fox Valley area to see Matt (Kenseth) come back and race at a track that has helped his career," Kenseth stated. "I also want the fans in Wisconsin to have an opportunity to see all of the special events that the area race tracks will offer. I don't want to put (fans) in a position where they have to make a tough choice. We reviewed other tracks' 2005 schedules and saw a possible conflict. I felt it was in the best interest for everyone in racing - fans, drivers and other tracks - that we change our date."

Kenseth also stated that the advance ticket on-sale date will be announced in a future press release. A VIP package will also be available.

Kenseth has also stated that he is working on having other NASCAR stars at this event. "This is going to be a fun event, and I feel that changing the date to June 21 was the right thing to do."

## Luxemburg Promoters, Kewaunee Co. Come to Terms

LUXEMBURG, WI — The promoters of Luxemburg Speedway's weekly Friday night program and a Kewaunee County committee have agreed to terms for renting the fairgrounds in 2005.

Late last year the Kewaunee County Promotions and Recreation Committee had proposed a per-event rent increase of \$275 per night for use of the grounds. Track operators Lakeshore Motorsports Promotions flatly rejected the proposed increase. On Monday, January 24, the committee backed off on its earlier demands and agreed to keep the rental agreement of \$1,600 per evening the same. The committee's vote was unanimously in favor.

"We're very relieved, to say

the least," said track manager Rick Goral. "Once the committee realized that as track promoters we're already paying the highest rent in the area I think it opened their eyes a little bit. We're confident we can work together in a cooperative effort with our county leaders from this day forward."

Lakeshore's rental agreement also includes a one-dollar-per-ticket surcharge on all adult tickets. By agreeing to terms both parties avoided going to arbitration, which County promotions and recreation director Mark Kanz said would have been a "lose-lose situation."

Goral expects to have the season schedule finalized within the next few weeks. Among the special events

## Rockford Speedway 2004 Champs Honored

LOVES PARK, IL, January 31 — Over 400 competitors, crew members, sponsors, fans and officials gathered Saturday, January 29, at the Forest Hills Lodge to honor the 2004 Rockford Speedway champions.

Following opening comments from Speedway president Jody Deery, Speedway general manager Gregg McKarns and NASCAR's Clem Drost, the champions took the spotlight.

Figure-8 train race champions Jim Daugherty and Joe Pirrello began the parade, followed by Hornet champ Mark Bielefeldt. Deanna Hurd spoke highly of her Winged Women on Wheels competitors in her reception speech, as did figure-8 champion Lorron Strahorn. First-time champion David Eggert claimed not only the Roadrunner Challenge championship but top honors in the NASCAR

RoadRunners.

NASCAR American Short Tracker Brett McCoy received his second championship in four years, while Scott Lawver made it four titles in a row and five overall in the NASCAR Grand National ranks. Ricky Bilderback completed the championship parade as he spoke about his fourth NASCAR late model championship at the quarter-mile paved oval.

The team of Ryan Carlson was voted the Team Player of the Year. Dan and Cheryl Lignell were honored for their dedication to Rockford Speedway in arranging numerous public appearances across the region, as they received the first Achievement Award of the evening.

A video documenting the 26 years that Ron "Swede" Johnson has spent at Rockford Speedway paved the way for a standing ovation as the track's pit stewart

made his way to the podium.

The Jody Deery Award of Excellence was awarded to Winged Women on Wheels champion Hurd for her countless contributions to the sport of auto racing. The final award of the night was the Hugh G. Deery Memorial Award, and longtime Speedway friend and team member Jim Abruso accepted the award and reminded the audience that without them, he wouldn't be able to do all that he does.

The 2005 Rockford Speedway campaign kicks off with the 28th annual Spring Classic April 2-3. The 58th season opener will take place the following Saturday, April 9. For more information, contact the Speedway box office at (815) 633-1500.

## Twenty-Four Badger Midget Events Planned for '05

by Bryan Gapinski

MILWAUKEE, WI, Jan. 21 — Officials of the Badger Midget Auto Racing Association have announced a 24-race schedule for the 2005 racing season. It will be the 69th year of sanctioning midget auto racing for BMARA, the oldest active association in the country.

Angell Park Speedway in Sun Prairie will be the cornerstone of the series, hosting 17 Sunday night events beginning with a 50-lap event on May 15. The season finale will be the 24th annual Fireman's Nationals on September 4.

Spoon River Speedway in Canton, IL, becomes the fourth different track to host BMARA's season opener in the past six years, on Sunday afternoon, April 10. The DQ

Classic will be the first-ever sanctioned event by Badger at the facility and will be co-sanctioned with the Gateway Midget Series.

The Butler Battlegrounds in Quincy, MI, will host a BMARA event for the first time since the 1998 season opener, on April 30.

The fourth annual Knoxville Midget Nationals at Knoxville (IA) Raceway will be on June 3-4. A format change to the event will include complete feature events run on both nights. BMARA will join ARDC, Gateway, MARA and RMMRA in sanctioning the event. Jerry Coons, Jr., is the defending champion.

For the first time in ten years, BMARA returns to the Wilmot Speedway for two events, on June 18 and

August 6. The track has been redesigned since Dan Boorse won on August 11, 1995. During the track's history it has also hosted midget events sanctioned by Dairyland, MARA, USAC and UARA.

The Raceway at Powercom Park in Beaver Dam will host its 35th BMARA-sanctioned event on Saturday night, July 16. The event will also feature the IRA Outlaw Sprint Series, and the midget portion will be co-sanctioned with the Gateway Midget Series.

Additional events are being negotiated and will be announced as they become official. The complete BMARA schedule will be included in CFRN's Race Fan Guide, to be published with the April 6 issue.

## SPI Tracks Announce Opening Dates

FARLEY, IA — The Simmons Promotions, Inc., family of race tracks have announced their opening dates of racing action for the 2005 season.

Racing action at Farley Speedway begins on Friday, April 15, with the Open Late Model Shootout. On the following weekend, the regular points season gets underway. Also on the 2005 Farley schedule, race fans will enjoy a return of the World of Outlaw Late Model Series and Sprint Series, the UMP Summernationals, the AMA Flat Track Motorcycle Series, and the 28th running of the

Yankee Dirt Track Classic. Season tickets and pit passes are now available.

Dubuque Speedway roars to life on Sunday, April 17, with its regular points season opener. Three late model specials are currently on the schedule for Dubuque, including the second "Rumble by the River." Season tickets and pit passes are now available.

Grant County Speedway in Lancaster, WI, will start its 2005 points season on Saturday, April 30. The IRA Outlaw Sprint Series will make a tour stop there in September. Season tickets and pit passes are now available.

## Stewart Sticking to Past Successes with Eldora Schedule

ROSSBURG, OH, Feb. 3 — With the release of the 2005 slate of events for his newly acquired Eldora Speedway, Tony Stewart is sticking to his pledge of "not trying to reinvent the wheel." The menu, which will feature several national sanctioning bodies and a wide variety of racing machinery, mirrors that of previous years.

Says Stewart, "Eldora has a rich heritage, and our goal is to continue that legacy by maintaining the active line-up that the fans have come to expect." To that extent, as the

speedplant enters its 52nd year of operation, the traditional dates will return.

Headlining the major dates for sprint cars will be the Kings Royal weekend July 15-16, again featuring the World of Outlaw Series each night, along with the National Racing Alliance Sprint Invaders. Compete and separate programs will be contested each night, with Saturday's finale offering a \$50,000 top prize.

A smorgasbord of sprint car racing will be staged on the half-mile clay oval three weeks later, topped by the biggest race of the year for USAC's National sprint division - the Mopar Thunder, which pays out \$50,000 to the non-winged victor on Saturday, August 6. The two nights prior to that will see the All Star sprints kicking off the festivities on Thursday, followed by the World of Outlaws on Friday.

For late model fans, the World 100 will fill its customary time-slot of the weekend after Labor Day, this year falling on September 9-10. Also, the \$100,000-to-win Dirt Late Model Dream will also fall into its accepted time frame of two weekends after Memorial Day, June 10-11.

Other standard dates on the Eldora calendar include the Four Crown Nationals on

September 23-24 and the UMP Nationals on October 8-9, while more recent creations, such as the Border Wars event, on April 30, and the Buckeye Nationals on June 25, have been re-linked as well.

Sanctioning bodies involved with Eldora this year include the WoO and All Stars for sprints; USAC for sprints, midgets and Silver Crown cars; United Midwestern Promoters for late models and modifieds; and National Racing Alliance for 360 sprints. The area stock cars, which fill many of the dates, will continue to run under Eldora's designation.

Of interest on the announced schedule are two "to be announced" dates. Stewart hasn't said what those may include, but in a letter released to Eldora's fan-based mailing list he indicated that "several NASCAR driver friends may be testing their luck on dirt, and, yes, I will certainly strap on the helmet and test the competition in a few events." This has opened the door to the rumor mill and created quite a buzz.

Eldora's 2005 season will begin Saturday evening, March 26, with the American Late Model Series, along with the UMP, modifieds and Eldora stocks.

## New Midget HoF Officers Announced

SUN PRAIRIE, WI, Feb. 7 — Les McBurney, race organizer and general manager of the famed Angell Park Speedway, has been elected president of the National Midget Auto Racing Hall of Fame, replacing Bill Marvel, who declined re-election but will continue to serve as a board member.

Angell Park is the site of the Hall of Fame, which has enshrined 110 deserving motorsports participants since its inception in 1984.

Joining McBurney as newly-elected officers in elections completed last week are vice-president Dick Jordan of Indianapolis, IN, secretary Art Graham of Brownsburg, IN, and treasurer Bill Engelhart of Evansville. Jordan is a vice-president of USAC,

while Graham is a former USAC vice-president and director of timing and scoring for both the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and USAC, and Engelhart is a former driver who was inducted into the Hall in 1997.

All four officers' terms began February 1. In a transition to staggered terms, McBurney will serve in his post until August 2008, while Jordan and Graham will serve through August 2007 and Engelhart through August 2006. Subsequent officer elections will return to three-year terms.

The National Midget Auto Racing Hall of Fame exhibit is located in the Pavilion located outside turns 1 and 2 at Angell Park. The track will host its inaugural "Hall of Fame Classic" the weekend of August 27-28, with four new inductees added.

Ed Watson, former Hall of Fame secretary-treasurer and a major contributor to the Hall's success, will continue as its publications coordinator and consultant.

Persons seeking additional information about the National Midget Auto Racing Hall of Fame may access contact information at its website: [www.worthyofhonor.com](http://www.worthyofhonor.com).



## Five Star to Produce New Charger Bodies

TWIN LAKES, WI, Jan. 29 -- Five Star Race Car Bodies is preparing to debut its new offset fiberglass (ABC-approved) 2005 Dodge Charger stock car body package, following the upcoming Daytona 500. The new package has been designed to capture the trademark looks and style of the new DaimlerChrysler street-going version.

"We are very excited at the release of this new model," stated Five Star sales representative Dave Kamholtz. "The best thing for the racer is all of the common parts. The only changes that have been made have been to the plastic nose, quarter-panels and decals; it still shares the same common parts that the Intrepid used."

This body style will be accepted as part of the "ABC" body program being adopted by many tracks, series and sanctioning bodies in North America for 2005. Unfortunately, it will not be allowed for competition with the NASCAR Elite Series touring divisions or as part of the 2005 late model stock car rules package set forth by NASCAR for tracks running that style of car.

The Dodge Charger joins the ranks of other popular models available from Five Star, including the Chevrolet Monte Carlo, Ford Taurus, Pontiac Grand Prix and Dodge Intrepid. In addition, the same wide range of options - from lightweight roofs and hoods to plastic fenders, window braces, body supports, vinyl graphics and other accessories - will all be available for the new model.

Five Star has been a leading manufacturer of fiberglass, steel and aluminum bodies and associated components designed specifically for the auto racing industry since 1979, and has been a leading proponent of the template-style bodies for use in short-track oval racing throughout North America. For more information on the new Dodge Charger body and other products, contact Five Star's customer service department at (262) 877-2171.

## 2005 Spring Classic Returns to Rockford

by Kevin Ramsell

ROCKFORD, IL -- The 28th annual Spring Classic will commence the 58th season of racing at the Rockford Speedway on April 2-3, 2005. The highlight will be a 150-lap feature for the NASCAR Midwest Touring Series.

Defending race champion Steve Carlson will be back to attempt to capture his 14th Midwest Series win at the historic quarter-mile paved oval. Other entries include 2004 National Short Track Championship winner Eddie Hoffman, 2004 Midwest Series champion Justin Diercks, former Wisconsin Challenge Series champ Erik Darnell and former ASA rookie of the year Dan Fredrickson.

Also joining the Midwest Series will be the Mid-American stock cars, Northern late models and the Big 8 Limited Late Model Series, which made its debut at the 2004 NSTC.

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## Schauer Memorial Rookie Award to be Continued by New Series

WATERTOWN, WI -- Officials of the new American Stockcar League have confirmed that the annual Rookie of the Year Award honoring former driver Pat Schauer will be continued.

Schauer, who resided in Watertown, was killed in a stock car racing accident on October 4, 1981, at the Winchester (IN) Speedway during an American Speed Association race. Schauer was the rookie points leader at the time. He has since been honored annually by rookie of the year awards presented in his name by the ASA at its annual banquet.

The rookie of the year program was to be officially announced at the ASL's organizational and informational meeting February 5 in Janesville.

Schauer's widow, Mary Zwieg, was very excited to hear the news. "My boys were very disappointed to hear the American Speed Association was not running events this year. This announcement really makes my day. I am truly honored," she said.

Longtime racer Rick Beebe has been named chairman of the ASL Rookie Recognition Program.

For more information, contact the Mid-American Stock Car Series, Inc., office at (920) 823-2856.

## 'Thursday Night Thunder' Returns to Speedrome

INDIANAPOLIS, IN -- USAC's "Thursday Night Thunder," which captivated America's racing attention in the 1980s and 1990s, returns this season to the Indianapolis Speedrome, which has switched its "open-wheel" scheduling from Wednesdays to Thursdays.

Following a year in which its champions included USAC's initial female titlist (Sondi Eden), USAC's youngest champ (Dakoda Armstrong) and a second-generation king (Brice Kenyon), the fifth-mile paved oval will again host Regional Midget, Ford

Focus Midget and Kenyon Midget Series competition on a weekly basis from May 5 through August 3. In addition, the May 26 events will also award points toward the National midget and Midwest Ford Focus titles.

An open practice is slated at the oval on April 27 from 4 pm to dark, and the 14-week series debuts the following Thursday night, May 5.

The Series finales will actually be held on a Wednesday night - August 3 - during the week of the Brickyard 400 NASCAR Nextel Cup race at the Indianapolis Motor Speed-

## NASCAR Media Tour an Eye-Opener

by Mark W. Thelsen

CHARLOTTE, NC, January 27 -- As I was making plans for my 35th season as a motorsports writer I set a goal to attempt to cover some different events and see different places.

At the top of my "to-do" list was to attend the annual Lowe's Motor Speedway Media Tour, an event touted by my colleagues for the past 21 years as the "event of the year" - an opportunity to see first-hand what the teams were going to do for the coming season.

Because of circumstances each and every year I was never even able to apply, much less be accepted, to attend the tour. But this year, after a concerted effort I was invited to attend the 22nd annual Tour, and at the conclusion of the four-day event I can conclude that, despite its many shortcomings, NASCAR has its "ship" in order and is poised for continued growth long into the future.

Much of the talk of the tour regarded the growth of the race shops. Penske South Racing has recently moved in a 426,000-plus-square-foot facility that they cannot even use all of at this time. Joe Gibbs Racing is adding 100,000 more square feet to its already-impressive facility to provide room for its third team. Hendrick Motorsports has added a new state-of-the-art building to house the teams of Brian Vickers, Kyle Busch and Terry Labonte, to go along with its sprawling race campus adjacent to Lowe's Motor Speedway. Ray Evernham Motorsports is building a third addition to its facility in as many years.

These expansions mean that these teams are healthy and attracting more sponsors, which can enable them to expand the number of teams that they field in the various NASCAR series. But in order to expand, these teams need drivers - young talent that will continue to bring audiences into NASCAR as the more senior members of the series begin to downsize their efforts and exit the sport. It is this facet of the tour that

intrigued me the most.

Much has been written in the past few years of the "driver diversity" program that NASCAR had hoped would attract African-American, Hispanic and female drivers to their race series, but outside of a few haphazard efforts nothing really had transpired. Now everything seems to have been kicked into high gear with the pending retirements of Rusty Wallace and Mark Martin, the reduced efforts of Bill Elliott and Labonte and the question marks hovering over the careers of Sterling Marlin, Ricky Rudd and Dale Jarrett.

Evernham, Hendrick, Gibbs, Richard Childress Racing and Jack Roush Racing all introduced their candidates for future stardom during the week and are serious in every facet of the programs that will bring their selections to the forefront of the sport. The "driver diversity" program is still intact, but the phrase "driver development" was heard more often than not over the duration of the tour, and herein lies the reason that I think NASCAR is doing it right.

In order to insure that television sets will continue to be tuned to the races, NASCAR needs fresh new faces. Race fans are certain to follow the careers of drivers that they watched compete on the short tracks of their area when those drivers move up the racing ladder towards the big time. This translates into ratings, and the higher the ratings, the more sponsors will come into the sport.

This is the way it once was in this country. Success on the short track was noticed and rewarded with prominent rides. However, with the cost of racing being what it is today, that route has become much more difficult. It was tough to make the move if you didn't have the money. The truck-to-Busch-to-Cup route seemed too remote for short-track drivers from just anywhere.

Now, with the fact that the American Speed Association - long a "developmental series" of sorts - has gone out of

business, the need for NASCAR to do something has become even more apparent. And at a time when other race series have abandoned local racers in favor of moneyed drivers that can pay for a full-season ride in lieu of a sponsor, and having seen its television ratings dwindle and its teams' sponsorships become almost non-existent, NASCAR has instituted a program - embraced by most of the teams - that can insure that interest in the series will continue to grow.

Evernham is giving talented drivers Tommy Lane and Erin Crocker a chance to build their names on short tracks in the South and Midwest while having them under contract to insure that they will remain with the company. Childress has taken, among others, three-time Indy Racing League Most Popular Driver Sarah Fisher under his wing and has contracted for her to drive in the NASCAR West Series, in order to hone her late model driving skills, and, when she's ready, will move her up the ladder. Fisher's is a recognized name in the Midwest, and her loyal fans will follow her efforts along the stock car trail, adding to the already-growing list of NASCAR television viewers.

Having this line of succession in place can do nothing but good. I'm sure some of the drivers will not have what it takes and will wash out, but the most important thing is that the effort itself is an ongoing one, sure to produce some of the stars of the future - stars from parts of the country where NASCAR may not be that well-received - and all that translates into ratings and more sponsors. It is a simple plan, but insuring that the talent is available for the long run is the most important insurance policy they can carry.

The most interesting development program of them all involves Todd Kluever of Sun Prairie and Roush Racing, and I will cover this in my next feature in CFRN.

## Straight-Rail LMs to be Permitted in NASCAR Elite Division Short-Track Events

DAYTONA BEACH, FL, Jan. 26 -- Beginning in 2005, NASCAR will once again allow straight-rail late model cars, which are raced at many short tracks and regional racing series throughout the nation, to compete in NASCAR AutoZone Elite Division events at tracks one-half mile in length and under.

The rule change will allow local and regional competitors with eligible cars to compete in Elite Division events when the NASCAR touring division visits their home track - a practice not allowed in recent seasons due to previous car specifications.

"This change will create opportunities for short-track racers across the nation to test the waters in a NASCAR touring division using their own equipment," said Don Hawk, NASCAR's director of regional racing development. "After thoroughly reviewing the concept, we're confident that this change will bring about more participation from local teams and drivers, increased competition at NASCAR AutoZone Elite Division

events, and more racing excitement for fans in the stands."

Under previous NASCAR rules, Elite Division events were limited to perimeter-frame cars, which feature a different chassis design. With the addition of the straight-rail frame design to the 2005 rules package, local racers can now enter these NASCAR events on short tracks, using the same car they compete with on a regular basis, provided it meets NASCAR specifications.

To match the two styles of cars on short tracks, all perimeter-frame cars must maintain a maximum left-side weight of 56 percent, while straight-rail frame cars must maintain a maximum left-side weight of 54 percent. Perimeter-frame cars must use the NASCAR-approved symmetrical body design, while straight-rail frame cars must use either the NASCAR-approved symmetrical body design or the ABC (Approved Body Configuration) body design.

## Sixteen-Race MARS Late Model Schedule Announced for 2005

BAILEYS HARBOR, WI -- A record 16 races are planned for the Midwest AllStar Racing Series paved-track late models in 2005.

There are seven events listed each for Wisconsin and Minnesota and two planned in Missouri.

One of the highlights of the 2005 slate will be a Sunday afternoon, August 28, event at The Milwaukee Mile during the Governor's Cup Weekend. Also on the card for the August 27-28 weekend in West Allis will be USAC sprint cars, the NASCAR Midwest Touring Series, and Mid-American-sanctioned super trucks, stock cars and the Midwest Stock Car Classics.

The Series returns for the seventh straight season for the 34th annual Red, White & Blue State Championship at Wisconsin International Raceway in Kaukauna on Saturday nights, June 11, July 23 and August 13. Twin 50-lap fea-

tures are planned on the D-shaped half-mile, along with action involving the Mid-American Stock Car Series and limited late models.

MARS will also sanction the ACDelco Late Model Series on Saturday nights, June 25 and August 6, along with Sunday night, September 4, at the Elko (MN) Speedway.

The Series returns to Madison International Speedway after a two-year absence. The two events at the Oregon half-mile are planned for Friday nights, June 17 and September 2. There will also be a special non-points event for MARS cars at MIS on Tuesday night, June 28, during the Miller Nationals.

The Series opener will be at the high-banked I-70 Speedway in Odessa, MO, on Saturday night, May 28. A second

non-points event will be run at I-70 during the World Cup Weekend on Saturday, October 1.

The Series also makes three stops at the 3/8th-mile paved I-94 Raceway in Sauk Centre, MN, on Saturday nights, June 4 and July 30, and the season championship points event on Saturday and Sunday, September 17-18.

A return engagement is also planned at the 3/8th-mile Fergus Falls (MN) Raceway after a highly successful 2004 race. This year's Fergus Falls date is Friday night, July 29.

The complete MARS late model series schedule will be included in CFRN's Race Fan Guide, to be published with the April 6 issue. For additional information, contact the Series office at (920) 823-2856.

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## Mid-Am Stock Cars Begin 14th Season at Rockford

ROCKFORD, IL -- The Mid-American Stock Car Series drivers will begin their 2005 campaign at the Rockford Speedway on Saturday and Sunday, April 2-3.

The 14th annual Series opener is expected to be a 75-lap feature contested on the high-banked Rockford Speedway quarter-mile paved oval.

One of the highlights of the 2005 schedule will be a Saturday afternoon, August 27, appearance at the historic Milwaukee Mile in West Allis, WI, during the Governor's Cup Weekend, which will also feature USAC sprint cars, NASCAR Midwest Series late models, Midwest AllStar Racing Series late models, Mid-Am super trucks, and Midwest Stock Car Classics spread out over August 27-28 in an event that will resemble the famous Copper World Classic held in Phoenix, AZ.

"We anticipate having a finalized schedule in several weeks," said Mid-American Series president Gary Vercauteran. "We should have either 20 or 21 races. There is one event that is holding up the release of the schedule, but we'd rather be complete than release something where there would be several date changes," he added.

The Series drivers will be competing in all three of the 34th annual Red, White & Blue State Championship Series events at the Wisconsin International Raceway half-mile

paved oval in Kaukauna, WI, on Saturday nights, June 11, July 23 and August 13. The Series will also make three stops at Madison International Speedway in Oregon, WI, on Friday nights, May 20, July 15 and August 5, with Triple Crown bonus money to be posted.

Four stops are scheduled for the 3/8th-mile paved Elko (MN) Speedway oval - on Saturday nights, April 30, May 28 and July 2, and Sunday night, September 4. A Daytona 500 race weekend package awaits the overall champion of the four races at Elko Speedway.

Two dates are also planned at the quarter-mile 141 Speedway in Francis Creek, WI - on Saturday nights, June 25 and September 3. Two stops are planned at the 3/8th-mile Lake Geneva (WI) Raceway, on June 18 and October 1-2.

Rockford Speedway will bring the Mid-Am stockers back for its annual Short Track Nationals on September 24-25, and the season wraps up Saturday night, October 8, at the LaCrosse Fairgrounds Speedway in West Salem, WI, during the Oktoberfest Race Weekend.

The complete Mid-American Stock Car Series schedule will be included in CFRN's Race Fan Guide, to be published with the April 6 issue. For additional information about the series call (920) 823-2856.

## Baltes to Be Honored with Local Tribute

ROSSBURG, OH, Feb. 3 -- In recognition of their 51 years of marketing and exposing the Darke County area through their Eldora Speedway, Earl and Berneice Baltes will be honored by several local entities on Saturday afternoon, March 26.

Appropriately entitled "Thanks For the Memories," the tribute will feature several noted speakers, including 2003 NASCAR champion and new Eldora Speedway owner Tony Stewart; television commentator Dave Argabright, who just completed publication of a book detailing the life of Earl Baltes; and officials of the United States Auto Club. Others will be announced as

they are confirmed.

Also expected during the festivities, Earl Baltes will be given the chance to rebuke the stories and experiences as told by his roasters.

The gala is to be held at the Eldora Ballroom and sponsored by Darke County Visitors Bureau, Downtown Greenville, Inc., Darke County Chamber of Commerce, Union City Chamber of Commerce and the Versailles Chamber of Commerce. Tickets include a full luncheon prior to the ceremonies but are limited in number and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Tickets must be purchased in advance; none will be sold at the door.

Tickets are available at the Darke County Visitors Bureau, the Darke County Chamber of Commerce and the Second National Bank branch at Third & Walnut in Greenville; at House of Flowers, John's IGA and Second National Bank in Versailles; at Whistle Stop in Ansonia; at the Union City Chamber of Commerce and Corner Cupboard Hallmark in Union City; and at the Second National Bank in Ft. Recovery.

For further information, contact Deanna York at the Darke County Visitors Bureau at (937) 548-5158 or by e-mail at <dyork@visitdarkecounty.org>.

## Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance to Benefit from Elko Fund Raiser

ELKO, MN -- Tuberous sclerosis complex (TSC) is a little-known and so far incurable disease that affects approximately 50,000 individuals in the United States. Country Joe Homes hopes to make a difference on Saturday, June 25, during the first leg of the three-race AC Delco Super Summer Series at Elko Speedway, as proceeds from that night's event will benefit the Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance.

Kari Luther Carlson, vice-president of community outreach at the TS Alliance, recently pointed out that about 850 Minnesota residents have TSC, a genetic disorder that causes tumors to form in various organs - primarily the brain, eyes, heart, kidneys, liver and lungs. People with TSC often develop epilepsy, autism, and learning and behavioral problems.

Plans are in progress for a full day, beginning at the Country Joe Racing Complex in

Lakeville and then moving to the speedway. Still in the early development, plans for the day include a silent auction, a special race fan giveaway, speedway midway displays, a radio remote broadcast and a special event pace car. More plans are being formulated.

"TSC is usually recognized in children, and we're going to do everything we can to help," said Country Joe Homes owner Joe Miller. "It's just one of those things that we hope we can at least help a little with."

Besides twin 50-lap super late model features, the night will also include racing with the Sportsmen, Thunder cars and power stocks.

For further information about the TS Alliance or TSC, go online at <www.tsalliance.org> or contact the organization toll-free at (800) 225-6872 or by e-mail at <info@tsalliance.org>.

## Andretti Named Grand Marshal for RA Redman Challenge

ELKHART LAKE, WI, Dec. 17 -- Former World Champion, "Driver of the Century," racing patriarch and racing ambassador Mario Andretti will be grand marshal of Road America's Brian Redman International Challenge on July 14-17, Road America officials have announced.

The vintage event - one of the largest in the U.S. - will feature Formula One and Can-Am races plus other classes for vintage sports cars. In addition to on-track activities, Road America will organize a race car concours show on Friday evening and a sports car concours on Saturday evening, both in the Village of Elkhart Lake and free to spectators. Andretti will appear at various activities throughout the weekend, including fan autograph sessions.

Andretti is often referred to as the greatest race car driver of all time, having won at all levels of competition. Some of his most legendary accomplishments include winning the Indy 500, the Daytona 500 and the Formula One World Championship. He also won the Champ Car national championship four times and was a three-time winner at Sebring. Andretti took the checkered flag 111 times during a career that stretched over five decades and was named Driver of the Year in three different decades (the 1960s, '70s and '80s), Driver of the Quarter-Century in the '90s, and Driver of the Century in January 2000. He is the Champ Car leader in poles with 67, starts with 407, and laps led with 7,587. He is the only Champ Car driver to win races in four decades.

Andretti won two Formula 5000 races at Road America, in 1974 and '75, and three Champ Car races, in 1983, '84 and '87, all of which he started from the pole. Son Michael and grandson Marco have also seen the checkered flag at Road America.

Andretti retired from the Champ Car series in 1994 but remains active in the racing industry and in business.

A "super ticket" is available for all four days of the event and includes parking and access to the paddock, where the teams, shops and autograph sessions will be located. Daily tickets are also available, and children 12 and under will be admitted free when accompanied by a paid adult. Tickets and/or gift cards can be ordered online at <www.roadamerica.com>.



The 2004 Red Cedar Speedway honored its 2004 track champions during its recent banquet (l-r): Jake Redetzke (pure stocks), Justin Supri (pure stocks), Ron Hanestad (street stocks), Paul Harelstad (modifieds) and Mike Goodremote (late models). Missing is super stock champ Kevin Adams.

## Red Cedar Racers Celebrated

by Ed Reichert

EAU CLAIRE, WI, Jan. 22 -- The annual meeting, election of officers and awards banquet celebrating the 2004 racing season at the Red Cedar Speedway was held Saturday, January 22, at the Westgate Sportsman's Club.

Loren Miller was the master of ceremonies for the banquet and introduced Red Cedar Racing Association president Dave Rhead, who gave a "state of the speedway" address. Rhead announced that he had been re-elected earlier in the day for another term as president of the Association, while Patti Rhead was also re-elected to her position as executive director. Elected as board members for 2005 were Vince Weber and Jim Bourn, and selected as driver representatives were Brian Kohnke (pure stocks), Jan Hillman (street stocks), Randy Johnson (super stocks), Mark Thomas (Midwest modifieds), Brent Prochnow (modifieds) and Ashley Anderson (late models).

Miller announced that the annual car show would be held at the Dunn County Rec Park on March 25-26. The season opener is scheduled for April 15, and the opening round of the 2005 WISSOTA Challenge Series for late models will be held on May 26. The Punky Manor Challenge of Champions will be held on September 23-24.

The top ten drivers in each class were honored. Sharing the point title in the pure stocks, due to a tie, were Jake Redetzke and Justin Supri. Rounding out the top ten were Kevin Smeltzer, Wade Aspin, Mike Harshman, Robert Devine, Ryan Olson, Jesse Redetzke, Jeremy Dahl, Brian Perry and Austin Schultz.

Ron Hanestad was the point champion in the street stocks. He was trailed by Joe Rhead, Mark Thomas, Tito Viltz, Chris Peterson, Dan Svea, Bob Wood, Ryan Viltz, Butch Madsen and Troy Fransway.

Kevin Adams led the way in the super stocks for his first title at Red Cedar. He was closely pursued by Steve Hallquist, Cory Mahder, and

Steve Thomas, Tom Karis, Mike Keller, Kenny Davis, Johnson, Bryan Noyes and Ben Hillman.

Paul Harelstad drove to another modified point title, ahead of Todd Siddons, Brent Prochnow, Scott Splitstoesser, Ross Prochnow, Ron Mahder, Mike Anderson, Don Brightbill, Dana Lerum and A.J. Heuer.

Mike Goodremote led a one-two sweep by the Paul Gilberts Racing Team, as he topped Scott Gilberts to win the late model honors. Trailing were Jon Kurshinsky, Duane Mahder, Anderson, Tony Bahr, Jerry Redetzke, John Kaanta, Chad Mahder and Randy Gullixson.

The Hard Charger awards were awarded to the drivers in each division that gained the most positions in feature action over the course of the year. They went to Smeltzer and Jake Redetzke, who tied in the pure stocks; Peterson in street stocks; Adams and Aaron Wilson, who tied in super stocks; Lerum in mods; and Kaanta in the late models.

Rookies of the year were Smeltzer (pure stocks), Hillman (super stocks), Todd Werner (mods) and Chad Mahder (late models). There were no rookie qualifiers in the street stocks.

The Top Gun award, presented to the driver that wins the most feature wins during the year, was shared by Jake Redetzke and Hanestad.

The Sportsmanship awards, voted on by the drivers in each division, went to Dahl (pure stocks), Joe Rhead (street stocks), Thomas (super stocks), Splitstoesser (mods) and Kaanta (late models).

Volunteer workers at the speedway were honored for their service to the club. They included Gene Kaiser, Jim Jackson, Butch Booth, Dick Sogge and Jodi Kohnke. Receiving the Track Appreciation Award for service above and beyond the call was Dick Beguhn, who has been known to do each and every job around the track at one time or another.



Rookies of the year for 2004 at the Red Cedar Speedway in 2004 were (l-r) Kevin Smeltzer (pure stocks), Ben Hillman (super stocks), Todd Werner (modifieds) and Chad Mahder (late models).



The 2004 Red Cedar Speedway Sportsman of the Year award recipients were (l-r) Joe Rhead (street stocks), Steve Thomas (super stocks) and Scott Splitstoesser (modifieds) (Chris Burback photos)

## Knoxville Midget Nationals to be Run as Two Complete Programs

KNOXVILLE, IA, December 24 -- At the request of the five participating sanctions, the fourth annual Knoxville Midget Nationals on June 3-4 will consist of two complete racing programs.

The Friday night, June 3 affair will conclude with the 20-lap, 24-car, \$1,500-to-win "King Doodlebug Classic," which is no longer an invitational as in years past, and the Saturday night midget car program will conclude with the 25-lap, 30-car, \$3,000-to-win Knoxville Midget Nationals.

The participating sanctions include the American Racing Drivers Club, the Badger Midget Auto Racing Association, Gateway Racing, Inc., the Midwest Auto Racing Association and the Rocky Mountain Midget Racing Association.

According to racing journalist Chris Economaki, the term "doodlebug" was created by the "big car" gentry in the late 1930s for the increasingly-popular "midget" cars. Racing newspaper founder Walter E. Bull then started a contest to crown "King Doodlebug." According to National Sprint Car Museum board members Larry Ball, Jr., and Bill Hill, six drivers were all crowned King Doodlebug - Cletus "Cowboy" O'Rourke (1938), Bill Holmes ('39), Al Bonnell ('46), Ed "Dutch" Schaefer ('47), Bill Schindler ('48), and Ralph Pratt ('49).

The Friday midget races will include five heats, two B-mains, and the King Doodlebug Classic. Craig Carey of Illinois won the inaugural "King Doodlebug" title at Knoxville in 2003, while Jerry Coons, Jr., of Arizona won it in 2004.

The Masters Classic winged 360-cubic-inch sprint car race, for drivers ages 50 and over, will also take place on the first night of the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame induction weekend.

The top six finishers in the King Doodlebug Classic on Friday will transfer to the next night's Midget Nationals A-main. On Saturday, five heats and two B-mains will again be required to qualify the remaining 18 cars for the "A". In addition, six provisionals will be awarded to the highest-ranked 2004 point-getters from the five participating sanctions and the National Midget Driver of the Year standings that have not yet qualified for the national championship feature. Past champions include Mike Hess of Illinois (2002), Chad DeSelle of Wisconsin ('03) and Jerry Coons, Jr., of Arizona ('04). The winged 410-cubic-inch sprint car division will also compete in a full weekly race program that evening.

Knoxville Raceway will host open-track practices on Saturday, April 16, and Thursday, June 2.

## Hansen Takes Home Big Rewards at I-94/ Fergus Falls Banquet

by Dean Reller

AVON, MN, Jan. 27 -- Over 300 people gathered this past weekend at Rascals in Avon for the I-94 Raceway's and Fergus Falls Raceway's 2004 season awards banquet.

Dan Henley from the ASA Member Track Program was on hand to congratulate all of the 2004 season champions and spoke briefly about the exciting new things that the ASA Member Track Program will bring in the 2005 season.

ASA super late model driver Todd Hansen captured the division's championships at both tracks, as trophies were awarded to the top five in each division, and drivers who finished in the sixth through tenth positions each received a plaque.

Other champions at I-94 Raceway were John Notch (modifieds), Tim Brockhouse (Legends), Rob Dubnecay (limited late models), Jerry Messer (Thunder cars), Jeremy Fleck (UCars) and Darin Nelson (TQ stock cars). Other Fergus Falls Raceway championships went to Oren Hooper (modifieds), Tim Brockhouse (Legends), Kurt Kort (Thunder cars) and Josh Whipple (UCars).

Fergus Falls Raceway rookies of the year included Andy Hanson, Joey Johnson, Dirk Henry, Pat Dillon and Whipple. Rookie of the year awards also went to I-94 Raceway drivers Bill Rode, Johnson, Henry, Joe Karl and Jeremy Fleck.

Throughout the season, race fans voted for the Most Popular Driver Award, and those winners were Jeff Lofquist, Notch, Brockhouse, Gordy Mason, Karl, Carrie McDougall and Nelson.

Head flagman Eric Peterson presented Johnson and Messer each a Flagman's Choice Award, for conduct on and off the track.

Sportsman of the Year awards were voted on by those in attendance, and Messer, Andy Mayavski, Gary Oie, Terry Merten and Jon Olson were selected as winners from the I-94 Raceway. Sportsman of the Year winners at the Fergus Falls Raceway were Mark Milbeck, Jay Gronewold, Oie, Hooper and Molly Rhoads.

Mechanic of the Year awards were also selected by those in attendance. Winners at the I-94 Raceway were Patrick Amelung, Lee McDougall, Todd Tracy, Walt Johnson and Bryan Roach. Fergus Falls Raceway Mechanic of the Year winners were Rick Craig, Dan Bolstad, Bob Hanson, Walt Johnson and John Lofquist.

Tim Olson, co-owner of both race tracks, spoke to the crowd and thanked all for their hard work and participation. Olson also set the stage for the upcoming season by briefly addressing some of the things drivers and fans can expect, including an expanded Minnesota Late Model Challenge Series, a Labor Day ASA Late Model Series race, and other things yet to be announced.

## AM Racing Announces Driver Line-Up

SEBRING, FL -- Aston Martin Racing has confirmed an international driver line-up for the 2005 American LeMans Series season, which begins with the Twelve Hours of Sebring in March and includes the 24 Hours of LeMans.

The six drivers named were David Brabham (Australia), Tomas Enge (Czech Republic), Peter Kox (Netherlands), Pedro Lamy (Portugal), Stephane Ortelli (France) and Darren Turner (UK). This line-up of experienced sports car drivers will share driving duties in the team's two DBR9s at each of the races during 2005.

## Superior Speedway Honors Champs at Awards Banquet

by Jerry O'Brien

SUPERIOR, WI, Jan. 29 -- More than 200 drivers, crews, fans, friends and family paid tribute to the 2004 season champions at the annual Superior Speedway awards banquet, held Saturday at the Superior Elk's Club.

The evening's ceremony began with an introduction by master of ceremonies Chris Stepan of the Speedway's Board of Directors, including president Rob Miller, vice-president Harlow Filteau, secretary-treasurer Joyce Klick, and board members Katie Birdseye, Rob Gyselinck, Tom Stewart, Cindy Bloomquist, Rick Rivord and Al Uotinen.

After a brief review of the 2004 season and a preview of the 2005 season, Superior Speedway Hall of Fame selection committee secretary and track publicist Jerry O'Brien introduced the 2005 Hall of Fame inductees, who will be inducted during the Hall of Fame race in August. For 2005, five drivers from the Inactive Drivers category will be inducted: Don Springer, Vern Shaver, Barry Kettering, Bob Gherardi and Don Roseen; the Pioneer category inductee will be former flag man Art Johnson, and the nominee from the Active Driver category is Butch Madsen.

The 2004 Superior Speedway champions include Darrell Nelson (WISSOTA late models), Kelly Estey (WISSOTA modified), Ryan Aho (WISSOTA super stocks) and Marshall Andrews (WISSOTA street stocks).

Rookies of the year were named in two divisions. The modified division rookie of the year is Jody Bellefeuille, while the super stock rookie of the year is Dave Flynn.

For many years someone affiliated with the Speedway who is judged to have done the most to further the Speedway's success is awarded the Russ Laursen Memorial trophy, named for the legendary racer. The 2004 award was presented to Speedway secretary-treasurer Klick; it was her second time winning the award.

It was also announced that Speedway promoters and managers Larry "Butch" and Linda Erickson will not return as promoters for the 2005 season. The



Darrell Nelson (l) receives congratulations from Superior Speedway promoter Butch Erickson for his 2004 late model championship during the track's annual awards banquet, held January 29.



Ryan Aho (l) accepts his 2004 Superior Speedway super stock championships hardware from track promoter Butch Erickson during the track's annual awards banquet.



Superior Speedway promoter Butch Erickson (r) presents Marshall Andrews with his 2004 street stock championship awards at the track's banquet January 29.

Speedway Board president assured those in attendance that the Speedway will present races in 2005, as they have signed a two-year lease agreement with the Douglas County Board, and the Speedway Board is presently searching for a promoter-manager as well as working on a schedule that tentatively shows two AmsOil Late Model Series events,

(Ken Johnson photos)

two IRA Sprint Series events and two World Dirt Racing League late model events.

## ABC Raceway Honors Season's Best

by Nick Gima

ASHLAND, WI, Jan. 22 -- Five repeat champions were honored in front of nearly 600 drivers, crew members and fans in attendance during the ABC Raceway's annual end-of-season awards festivities and dinner at the Bad River Lodge banquet hall in Odanah on Saturday, January 22.

Nearly 60 trophies and a half-dozen special awards were presented, and the top 15 drivers in final 2004 points in each of the track's five divisions received shares of a \$14,000 points fund.

The event was emceed by track announcer Nick Gima, and opening remarks were made by Raceway president Kurt Beeksma, during which he congratulated the five champs and thanked and introduced the members of the track's Board of Directors. Also, veteran driver Bob Root was presented a diecast replica of his 2004 modified by Beeksma; Root, who has raced at the track during the past five decades, announced his retirement at this season's Red Clay Classic. The evening's festivities were then dedicated to Root's late wife Sandy.

Among the special presentations were the six-cylinder class Hard Charger awards, to third-place Chuck Hawkinson, second-place Steve Tesch and Hard Charger champ Dale Coddington. Also, the track presented its Sportsman of the Year award to six-cylinder driver and newly-elected Board member Greg Jaeger, and its Most Improved Driver award to six-cylinder driver Andy Grymala.

Named as 2004 ABC Raceway rookies of the year were Jim Eliason (pure stocks), Shawn McFadden, Jr. (sixes), Cory Casari (WISSOTA street stocks), Chris Martens (WISSOTA super stocks) and Ross Lightner (WISSOTA modifieds).

Beeksma presented the Chuck Anderson Award - given annually to those who have donated to the success of the track in the truest tradition of volunteerism - to the Lajcek family, for their generous efforts. Then Beeksma introduced a new award - the President's Award, presented to someone who has helped in the success of the speedway in a behind-the-scenes, long-

term effort. The initial recipient of the award was Gima.

Casari, of Hurley, was the first of the champions to be introduced. In his successful defense of his pure stock title, he led the division with five feature wins and won the track's first-ever Pure Stock Special in '04.

Ashland's Ron Swanson received his second six-cylinder points championship, but his first since 1995, after which he retired from racing until this past season. Swanson finished first, second or third in 11 of the 12 heat races he entered last summer and collected two feature wins.

The street stock title was presented to Larry Haderly of Marengo. It was his second title, adding to the one he won in 2002. He set division-bests in heat wins (six) and feature wins (tied with three) and finished in the top five in all 11 of his features run in '04 - the only driver in any class to accomplish that.

Superior's Scott Lawrence claimed his fourth ABC Raceway championship in 2004, but his first in a super stock and his first since his street stock dominance in 1997-'99. He tied for a track-best seven heat wins, and his lone feature checkered moved him to 15th on the track's all-time win list.

Another Superior driver, Al Uotinen, celebrated his 25th season of stock car racing by earning his second modified championship in Ashland - and his first since 1993 - in the closest points battle of 2004. He led the division in top-five feature finishes (six) and heat wins (tied with four) while collecting two feature wins.

Also during the evening, over \$600 was collected for a donation to the family of former racer Darryl Kovach, who was recently diagnosed with leukemia and is currently undergoing treatment.

The 38th season of racing under the banner of the Ashland-Bayfield County Racing Association at the 3/8th-mile red clay oval south of Ashland will begin in mid-May. A complete schedule is currently in the works and will be released when completed; it will also be included in CFRN's Race Fan Guide, to be published with the April 6 issue.

## Wednesday Races Return to Greenbelt Speedway

ELDORA, IA, Jan. 27 -- Wednesday night races return to Greenbelt Speedway this season, with three IMCA-sanctioned divisions heading weekly programs.

Willie Brown, Sr., who promoted specials at the Hardin County Fairgrounds track the last two years as well as the Iowa Enduro Series in 2004, is in charge of the programs at Eldora.

IMCA modifieds, stock cars and hobby stocks will see action on the fast half-mile dirt track. Sanctioned mods and stocks were on the card from 1987, when the speedplant was known as Harconia Raceway, through 2000; the hobby stocks were last sanctioned in 1990-'91.

A practice day for all classes is scheduled for Saturday, April 9. Points races start April 13 and continue through season championship night on August 31. The fair board is planning a chili supper, to raise money to help pay for improvements in the seating, along with a silent auction and bake sale on Saturday, February 19, at the 4-H building on the fairgrounds, with serving from 5-9 pm.

## Haglund is New Promoter at Shelby County

HARLAN, IA, Jan. 25 -- Long-time race fan Bill Haglund is the new promoter this season at Shelby County Speedway.

The 4/10th-mile track at Harlan will again sport four IMCA-sanctioned divisions on its Saturday night programs - the late models, modifieds, stock cars and hobby stocks.

An open practice night is planned for April 16, with the first points races of 2005 the following week. The point season continues through September 3.

Manager for RPM of Iowa, the corporation that operates Shelby County Speedway, Haglund has also done public relations and marketing work for NASCAR driver Dave Marcis, turned wrenches for Richard Childress and was gasman for the Helen Rae Special in the early 1980s.

Haglund headed speedways in Texas and Kansas before returning to Iowa. He announced at Hamilton County Speedway in Webster City the last three years and at Stuart Speedway last season. Haglund is also a member of the selection committee for the Sprint Car Hall of Fame at Knoxville Raceway.

## Comparisons of ARCA Champ Kimmel with Petty, Earnhardt Inevitable

DAYTONA BEACH, FL, January 21 -- Whether it's the ARCA Re/Max Series or the higher leagues in NASCAR, it's hard to be a champion. Six-time ARCA Series champion Frank Kimmel would know.

The Clarksville, IN, second-generation racer will seek his seventh series title when the 42nd annual Advance-Discount Auto Parts 200 rolls off from Daytona International Speedway on Saturday afternoon, February 12. And while the comparison between NASCAR's Nextel Cup Series and ARCA could be considered apples to oranges, there are, nonetheless, common denominators.

To be a champion in either sanction, you have to excel on a variety of track shapes and sizes over the course of a long, grueling season that stretches from February to October for ARCA - and even longer for NASCAR.

Dale Earnhardt, Sr., and Richard Petty pumped out seven NASCAR Cup Series championships each over the course of their careers, earning legendary status along the way.

Kimmel, on the other hand, has earned six ARCA championships. If he can do it again in 2005, he will not only become the only seven-time ARCA national champion (the late Iggy Katona also has six ARCA titles), but he will be the first driver in ARCA's 53 years to win six consecutive. He is already the only driver to have won four and five straight.

Whether Kimmel will be mentioned in the same sentence as Earnhardt or Petty in the future is as yet unclear. But if he earns that seventh series crown in '05, Kimmel can rightfully join Earnhardt and Petty as a seven-time stock car champion on a national tour that requires drivers to be skillful on similar short-tracks and many of the same superspeedways. NASCAR adds a couple of road courses to its schedule; in the case of ARCA, throw in a couple dirt tracks. Either way, it's hard to be a champion in either league.

In other comparisons, Petty, in 1,185 career Cup starts, won 200 races (first all-time) over the course of 34 years, making him a winner in approximately 17 percent of the races he started. For Earnhardt, his 76 career Cup wins (sixth all-time) were spread among 676 career starts during his 26-year NASCAR tenure - just over 11 percent of his total starts.

Kimmel, on the other hand, over a relatively short 15-year tenure, has earned 56 career series wins (second all-time) in 280 career starts - exactly 20 percent of all the races he has started.

Further, Kimmel, during his 15 years in ARCA, only won five races between 1990-'97. Since hooking up with car owner Larry Clement full-time in 1998, the year of his first championship, Kimmel has won 51 races. Therefore,

the Kimmel-Clement combination has produced an astounding ratio of starts-to-wins that is, arguably, unrivaled in American motorsports. During their seven-year (and counting) run together, they have won 33 percent of all the races they have started.

Of course, Kimmel is not yet - and may never be - a seven-time ARCA Series national champion. But given his track record lately, which includes six titles in seven years, you may not want to bet the farm against it.

Possibly the most telling and impressive stat outside his win-to-start ratio is his lap-leader mark of 8,251 laps led in 144 ARCA races. In addition, Kimmel is already ARCA's all-time leader in career earnings with over \$3 million - more than twice as much as the next driver in line.

With so much potential career yet ahead of him, it's fun to wonder what Kimmel's stats will look like when he finally hangs up his goggles for good somewhere down the road, whenever that should be. Whether Kimmel joins the seven-timer club or not remains to be seen, but either way, Frank Kimmel is a proven commodity and a remarkably talented multi-time champion in major-league national stock car racing. It's hard to be a champion, let alone a seven-time one.

## Parsons, Sneva Among Nine to Join Motorsports Hall

NOVI, MI -- NASCAR champion Benny Parsons, Indianapolis 500 winner Tom Sneva and LeMans 24-Hour King Hurley Haywood will lead a group of nine racing greats into the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America when the organization stages its annual induction ceremony on Thursday, August 18, at the State Theatre in Detroit.

Parsons, Sneva and Haywood will be enshrined along with drag racer Tommy Ivo, motorcyclist Jay Springsteen, powerboat racer Danny Foster, car owners and builders John Holman and Ralph Moody, and 1952 Indy 500 winner Troy Ruttman. The Class of 2005 will join the 126 racers already enshrined in the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America.

Currently an award-winning NASCAR television analyst, Parsons won the 1975 Daytona 500 and the 1980 Coca-Cola 600, as well as 19 other Winston Cup races. He won the 1973 Winston Cup title and was the ARCA champion in 1968 and '69. At Talladega in 1982, Parsons was the first NASCAR driver to qualify a car at more than 200 mph.

Sneva won the 1983 Indy 500 and 12 other Indy car races. He earned 14 pole positions and was the first driver to crack the mystical 200-mph barrier; he was also the first to eclipse 210 mph. Sneva won national championships in 1977 and '78 driving for Roger Penske.

Haywood is one of America's most-accomplished endurance drivers. He won the 24 Hours of LeMans three times (1977, '83 and '94), the 24 Hours of Daytona five times and the 12 Hours of Sebring twice. He was the first to win at LeMans and Daytona in the same year, and he won the Norelco Cup four times. He is IMSA's point leader among active drivers.

Ivo played a major role in drag racing's formative years, setting the early standard for showmanship with his glass-enclosed transporter and multiple-engine dragsters. The fierce and skilled competitor focused his career on one-on-one challenges with the sport's biggest names, and he went on to become one of the most popular and successful match racers in history.

## Silver Crown Series in '06 will Reflect USAC Expansion

INDIANAPOLIS, IN -- The United States Auto Club, which celebrates its golden anniversary this season, will experience unprecedented expansion of its premier racing series in 2006.

Development and realization of the recently-unveiled USAC Silver Crown race car will allow for racing at new high-profile venues for the series.

Homestead-Miami and Kansas Speedways are among tracks expected to be a part of the expanded 2006 racing calendar, with discussions in progress for new events at Kentucky and Nashville Speedways, in addition to already-existing Silver Crown venues.

The series' presence at these high-profile facilities and its potential inclusion with major traditional racing weekends is expected to generate increased exposure for the series through major media outlets and television. Accelerated prize money for

events at tracks longer than one mile in length is also an element of the 2006 Silver Crown Series slate.

The new USAC Silver Crown pavement car was introduced at the Performance Racing Industry trade show in Indianapolis in December, following successful testing at short tracks and superspeedways. The prototype, constructed by Riley Technologies of Indianapolis, exhibits the safety features sought by USAC in preparing for this series expansion. Sidepods, a newly-designed front nose and attenuator-style tail are part of the new car, which maintains the basic traditional Silver Crown design while offering maximum protection for the driver.

Specifications will be distributed to traditional Silver Crown Series car builders who are anticipating construction of their own unique racing machines in the coming months in preparation for the 2006 season.

## DIRT Motorsports Names New CFO

NORMAN, OK, Feb. 7 -- Boundless Motor Sports Racing, Inc., which oversees DIRT Motorsports, the owner of the World of Outlaws sprint car and late model racing series, announced that it has appointed Brian Carter as chief financial officer for DIRT. Carter will report directly to chairman and CEO Paul A. Kruger.

Since late 2000 Carter has held various positions with Prescient Applied Intelligence, a supplier of advanced commerce technology solutions. Currently, Carter serves on the Board of Directors of Prescient.

## Darland Takes USAC-CRA Opener at Manzanita

PHOENIX, AZ, Jan. 31 -- Dave Darland of Lincoln, IN, captured the January 29 opening round of the 2005 USAC/CRA Sprint Car Series at Manzanita Speedway. Darland won last year's USAC/CRA Manzanita debut and led the final nine laps of Saturday night's race.

Darland was third behind race leader Darren Hagen and Rickie Gaunt when they were involved in a tangle on the backstretch on lap 22. Hagen flipped after leading the first 21 laps but escaped injury.

Darland was trailed at the checkered flag by Charles Davis, Jr., Mike Spencer, Rick Williams and Tracy Hines. Qualifications were abandoned due to afternoon rains, and heat race wins went to Spencer, Cary Faas, Darland and Jesse Hockett. Hines won the semi.

Peter Murphy, Hockett and Faas also escaped injury in separate flips during the program at the half-mile dirt oval.

**RESULTS**  
Heat 1: Mike Spencer, Rickie Gaunt, Seth Wilson.  
Heat 2: Cary Faas, Mike Leslie, Rick Ziehl.  
Heat 3: Dave Darland, Jimmy Crawford, Bill Rose.  
Heat 4: Jesse Hockett, Josh Ford, Darren Hagen.  
Semi-Final: Tracy Hines, R.J. Johnson, Chuck Buckman, Jr.  
Feature: Darland, Charles Davis, Jr., Spencer, Rick Williams, Hines, Mike Kirby, Rose, Cory Kruseman, Johnson, Buckman.

## USAC Roundup

### Gardner, Williams, Kirby Run 1-2-3 at Perris

PERRIS, CA, Feb. 7 -- Damion Gardner of Concord captured Saturday afternoon's 30-lap USAC/CRA Sprint Car Series race at Perris Auto Speedway, beating defending Series champion Rip Williams to the checkered flag.

Williams, trying to notch his 100th career sprint car triumph, nearly caught Gardner on the final lap but had to settle for second ahead of Mike Kirby, Bill Rose and Seth Wilson. It marked the seventh time in two years that the top three drivers in the 2004 standings have finished 1-2-3 since the USAC/CRA series began at the start of the 2004 season.

Rose led the first ten laps and Gardner led the rest of the way.

The Series resumes February 19 with another 30-lap feature at the Perris oval.

#### RESULTS

##### USAC/CRA SPRINT CAR SERIES

Qualifying: Damion Gardner, 16.087 secs.  
Trophy Dash: Gardner, Danny Sheridan, Rickie Gaunt.  
Consolation: Ronnie Case, Danny Ebberts, Jordan Hermansader.  
Heat 1: David Carder, Bill Rose, Gardner.  
Heat 2: Seth Wilson, Jimmy Crawford, Rip Williams.  
Heat 3: Cory Kruseman, Tracy Hines, Randy Waitman.  
Heat 4: Steve Ostling, Tony Jones, Mike Kirby.  
Semi-Feature: Gaunt, Charles Davis, Jr., Mike Spencer.  
Feature: Gardner, Williams, Kirby, Rose, Wilson, Kruseman, Davis, Ostling, Alan Ballard, J. Hicks

## Triplett Tops Blythe Focus Midget 30-Lapper

BLYTHE, CA, Feb. 7 -- Matt Triplett of Albuquerque, NM, led the final eight laps of Saturday night's 30-lap USAC California Ford Focus Midget Series feature at the I-10 Speedway in Blythe. The race was the first of the season for the California Focuses and the first ever for USAC in Blythe.

Triplett chased Audra Sassei for 22 laps, then took the lead. Sassei finished second ahead of J.R. Trimino, Robbie Whitchurch and J.R. Williams.

Triplett was also the fastest qualifier. Sassei won a six-lap trophy heat and Steve Davis won an eight-lap heat race.

USAC Ford Focus midget racing continues February 19 with a return to the brand-new Southern Illinois Center indoor facility at the south edge of the DuQuoin State Fairgrounds. The final race in the Pepsi "Mid-America Ford Focus Midget Nationals" includes a 40-lap feature on the 1/6th-mile dirt oval. California Focus racing resumes March 12 at the third-mile dirt Bakersfield Speedway, while the next California Ford Focus Pavement Series event is March 26 at Irwindale Speedway.

#### RESULTS

##### USAC CALIFORNIA FORD FOCUS PAVEMENT MIDGETS

Qualifying: Matt Triplett, 14.077 secs.  
Trophy Heat: Audra Sassei, Chris Veach, Chase Barber.  
Heat: Steve Davis, Robbie Whitchurch, J.R. Trimino.  
Feature: Triplett, Sassei, Trimino, Whitchurch, J.R. Williams, Jon Santibanez, Veach, Barber, Davis.

## Steele Dominates to Win Copper World 100-Miler

AVONDALE, AZ, Jan. 30 -- Defending USAC Silver Crown Series champion Dave Steele of Tampa, FL, ran his "Copper World Classic" victory streak to four Sunday, winning the 100-mile feature at Phoenix International Raceway.

Steele led all 100 laps for the second straight year, pushing his total in the event to 267 straight laps on the point. He was challenged by runner-up Tracy Hines in the final quarter of the event but led Hines to the checkered flag for the third straight year. Trailing the lead duo were Tyler Walker, J.J. Yeley and Brian Tyler. Steele won the event by .224 seconds.

Steele, who started on the outside of the front row, darted to the front and was unmatched throughout the event, which featured eight cautions for 42 laps, including three yellows in the final ten laps.

Russ Gamester won the 15-lap qualifying race on Saturday. Bobby East ended Steele's three-race polesitter streak at the one-mile track, lapping the track at 139.147 mph.

The series will continue action in the "Hoosier Hundred" May 27 at the Indiana State Fairgrounds.

#### RESULTS

##### USAC SILVER CROWN SERIES

Qualifying: Bobby East, 25.872 secs.  
Consolation Race: Russ Gamester, Todd Beach, Boston Reid.

Feature: Dave Steele, Tracy Hines, Tyler Walker, J.J. Yeley, Brian Tyler, Wayne Reutemann, Jr., Jimmy Kite, Ron Gregory, Dave Darland, Eric Gordon.

## Yeley Gains Last-Lap Midget Win at PIR

AVONDALE, AZ, Jan. 30 -- Defending USAC midget "Copper World Classic" champ J.J. Yeley used a pair of slower cars to make the winning move in Sunday's 25-lap main event, part of the 28th annual "Copper World Classic" at Phoenix International Raceway.

Yeley led only the final lap of the contest, making a bold move in traffic to beat Jay Drake, teammate Bobby East, Dave Steele and Tracy Hines to the twin checkered flags.

Michael Lewis was the pacesetter during the first 15 laps of the caution-marred event, holding advantages of over a second at times before being brought in during a caution period for removal of a loose rear sway bar. East inherited the lead and held off Yeley and Drake until turn 4 of the final lap, when he went high to avoid running into slower traffic. Yeley split the middle and Drake dived low, and Yeley's final margin of victory was .049 seconds.

The USAC National Midget Car Series is idle until May 7 when it visits The Raceway at Powercom Park in Beaver Dam, WI, while the Western Midget Car Series resumes action March 5 at Altamont Motorsports Park in Tracy, CA.

#### RESULTS

##### USAC NATIONAL/WESTERN MIDGETS

Qualifying: Michael Lewis, 26.305 secs.

Feature: J.J. Yeley, Jay Drake, Bobby East, Dave Steele, Tracy Hines, Aaron Eike, Tom Hessert III, Josh Wise, Ron Gregory, Dallen McKenney.

## CRA Super Series Officials Release 19-Event Schedule

SALEM, IN, January 17 -- Officials of the CRA Super Series released a tentative schedule for the upcoming 2005 season. The schedule consists of 19 total events - 18 regular CRA Super Series points events, and the All American 300 non-points event co-sanctioned with the Southern All Star Racing Series.

On April 16 the CRA will open its season, as it has for the last eight years, at Anderson Speedway, the historic quarter-mile speedplant that was the birthplace of the Series in 1997. From there the Series will travel to Winchester Speedway on April 24 as part of that track's first event of its 2005 Grand Re-Opening Season. The Series will then travel to Mansfield (OH) Motorsports Speedway on April 30 for the first of two events at that facility in 2005.

The May 14-15 event at Indianapolis Raceway Park, where the CRA will again team up with the USAR Hooters Pro Cup Northern Series, will be followed by a return to Toledo (OH) Speedway on Memorial Day weekend for twin 100-lap features in conjunction with the Main Event Outlaw Late Model Series on Sunday, May 29.

The CRA stays in Ohio for the second annual Buckeye Bash at Columbus Motor Speedway on June 4, then travels to Michigan for the first of two shows at Berlin Raceway on June 18. The Series then visits Schererville for the Elmer Musgrave Memorial at Illiana Motor

## Rules for Six-Race CRA Street Stock Tour Released

SALEM, IN -- Champion Racing Association officials have released the rules for CRA street stocks, to be featured at Winchester Speedway five times during the 2005 season and once at Salem Speedway.

The standard purse for each event will feature a \$1,000-to-win, \$75-to-start payoff. On September 18 the CRA street stocks will run a 200-lap race at Winchester Speedway for \$5,000 to win, with 20th position paying \$200.

The standard 30-lap CRA street stock races will be held April 24, June 12, August 14 and September 4-5 at Winchester and October 22-23 at Salem Speedway. These five events, plus the \$5,000-to-win event at Winchester, will make up the championship schedule for the street stocks. The 2005 CRA street stock champion will be crowned as part of the eighth annual CRA Super Series awards banquet later this year.

This package of races has been a project that the CRA officials have wanted to put in place for a number of years, and the re-opening of Winchester Speedway has made it possible. CRA officials have also announced that the 200-lap event on September 18 will award double points.

Teams interested in the CRA street stock rules and entry forms for the \$5,000-to-win race can call (812) 883-0455.

Speedway on June 25 before the traditional Firecracker 125 on July 2 at the remodeled and reopened Angola Motor Speedway.

Next up on the schedule, the Anderson Speedway plays host to the 38th annual Anderson 400, on July 15-16. On July 31, the Series will return to Kalamazoo (MI) Speedway, and on August 13 it will race at Anderson for the final time in 2005.

On August 20 the Series will make its second visit to Berlin Raceway, and on September 5 the CRA will be part of the historic World Stock Car Festival at Winchester Speedway. The Series will then make its second visit of 2005 to Mansfield on September 11, and on September 24-25, the

Rockford (IL) Speedway will host its 40th annual National Short Track Championships, featuring the CRA's third visit to that historic quarter-mile track.

On October 1, the CRA Super Series will run a 150-lap event as part of the 2005 World Cup 300 at I-70 Speedway, and the points season closes on October 22-23 at Salem Speedway, where the Series championship will be decided. The season-ending All American 300 will be held at the Music City MotorPlex in Nashville, TN.

The complete 2005 CRA Super Series schedule will be included in CFRN's annual Race Fan Guide, to be published April 6.

## Deer Creek Announces 2005 Schedule

by Bill Nelson

SPRING VALLEY, MN, January 17 -- Deer Creek Speedway has announced its 2005 race schedule, with a calendar packed full of new specials and the return of many other popular events.

Highlighting the schedule are two new events for the season. On Monday, June 6, the 26th "Gopher 50" late model race will be held at the Speedway, with sanctioning from the World of Outlaws Late Model Series. The national touring series will make its first-ever appearance at Deer Creek, and all advance ticket holders of previous Gopher 50 races will be offered tickets before the tickets go on sale to the general public. More information on Gopher 50 ticket sales will be released soon.

On Saturday, June 25, the Bumper to Bumper IRA Outlaw Sprint Series will circle the speedway, making their first appearance here. A new speed record is expected to be set at the high-banked southern Minnesota speedway by one of the 410 winged sprinters.

Other events during the season include two United States Modified Touring Series visits, along with the seventh annual Fall Jamboree featuring the USMTS mods. The Combine Demolition Derby returns on July 13.

August 9 will also see the return of the World Dirt Racing League to the speedway. During August, all kids receive free admission into the Speedway.

Racing action starts April 9, and all April races will start at 5 pm.

## Youth Movement Brought to Forefront in Oglethorpe 'Shoot-Out'

by Katherine Adams

POOLER, GA, Feb. 5 -- The inaugural Young Guns Shoot-Out for young stars of dirt late model and open-wheel modified racing took center stage at this year's Oglethorpe Speedway Park Winternationals, while Robert Diekemper of nearby Bloomingdale stole the spotlight by winning both late model features on Friday and Saturday night over a field of 45 entries.

The 20-year-old Diekemper swept the action for the crate engine-powered division by qualifying fastest on both nights, then holding off Nebraska late model standout Steve Kosiski on Friday night and North Carolina hotshoe Tony Farris on Saturday.

Diekemper was the OSP late model rookie of the year in 2003 while collecting a remarkable Summer Sizzler 100 victory at the age of eighteen.

Friday night's show saw Kosiski finish second ahead of North Carolina's Branden Ifft. Local star Ronnie Tullis was fourth ahead of Jacksonville, FL's David Browning.

The strong runs for the young drivers left a few veterans sitting on the sideline. Legendary super late model driver Sonny Conley failed to make the show, along with perennial OSP Winternationals hot dog Skimp Henry. Last year's Fastrak Champions Tour champ Todd

Higdon had to use a provisional to get into the Friday night field, while the ageless Buck Simmons snuck into the field in the first of two last-chance races.

Saturday night's late model 30-lapper saw Tony Farris finish second to Diekemper, with Kosiski nabbing third. Ed Kosiski, Steve's brother, finished in fourth, followed by Timmy Millwood. The post-race inspection process bumped Farris from the finishing line-up, after his car was found to have an illegal spacer plate mounted between the carburetor and intake manifold. The disqualification moved Branden Yawn to fifth.

Last year's points runner-up at OSP, Donnie Bazemore, needed a provisional to gain the Saturday night starting field, while Jody Palmer, Billy Costello and Tullis watched from the sidelines.

In other action, three-time OSP street stock champion Ricky Bozard returned to action after a seven-year absence, shook off the rust and made a daring last-lap pass of Michael Davis to secure his first trip to victory lane since 1998. Brian Barnes was third followed by Adam Chambers and Albert Cosnahan.

Another former champion, Brian Barnes, broke into victory lane on Saturday night after he held off challenge after challenge to beat Chris Litchfield and Chris Casteel for his first trip to OSP's victory lane in over two years. Ricky Bozard was fourth

followed by Kyle Livingood.

The mini-stock race on Friday night was won by Josh Carter, while Saturday night's feature winner was Chris Wilkerson. In the 440 Series, Danny Herrington was Friday night's feature winner and David Smith won Saturday night's finale.

The Young Guns Shoot-Out also took place on Saturday night, and Florida's Bodine Massengill was the winner of the 25-lap main for late model drivers ages 18 and younger, while Iowa's Zack VanderBeek was the champion for the open-wheel modifieds.

### RESULTS

from Friday, 2/4:

#### LATE MODELS

1-10: Robert Diekemper, Steve Kosiski, Branden Ifft, Ronnie Tullis, David Browning, Timmy Long, Jonathan Joiner, Branden Yawn, Jody Palmer, Corey Fletcher.

11-20: Crandall Turner, Ricky Brant, Scott Shirley, Glenn Yawn, Lonnie Brant, Ed Kosiski, Todd Higdon, Darlene Mathison, A.J. Watson, Mike Bruner.

21-29: Ryan Bryson, Billy Costello, Donnie Bazemore, Tony Farris, Shane Riner, Dusty Williams, Jeremy Ledford, Buck Simmons, Brian Nuttal.

#### SUPER STREET STOCKS

1-10: Ricky Bozard, Michael Davis, Brian Barnes, Adam Chambers, Albert Cosnahan, Rick Hunter, Jay Hendricks, Chris Litchfield, Kyle Livingood, Andy Logue.

11-20: Ray Collins, Brian White, Chris Casteel, Sean Cloud, Vernon McCurry, Jessie Roberson, Tim Landin, Chris Hinly, Brian Trudell, Bobby Oostlander.

#### MINI-STOCKS

1-10: Josh Carter, Chris Wilkerson, Bobby Morris, Buddy Jacoby, David Johnkin, Brad McKenzie, A.J. Horton, Doug Briggs, Josh Parrish, unknown, Josh Carter.

## WDRL Announces 33-Race Slate

Five first-time venues included

by Tom Lathen

GILMAN CITY, MO, Jan. 29 -- The World Dirt Racing League Late Model Series has announced its 2005 schedule of events. The schedule, the largest in the Series' four-year history, consists of 33 events in seven states and includes five first-time venues for the series.

"We are very excited about this year's schedule," commented series founder and director Jim Wilson. "Most of the 2004 venues are back on this year's schedule, and we have been able to add a number of race tracks we have never been to."

The 2005 season opens on Saturday night, April 2, with the first of two Series appearances at Nebraska Raceway Park in Greenwood, NE; the curtain closes more than six months later at Outlaw Motor Speedway in Muskogee, OK, on October 14-15. The WDRL will also stop at the northeastern Oklahoma facility on May 21.

West Liberty (IA) Raceway will again host four series events in 2005, on April 9 and May 30, and for the second annual Al Frieden Memorial on September 23 followed by the Liberty Fall Classic the following night.

Davenport (IA) Speedway and Freeport (IL) Raceway Park will host three events each this season. In addition to an April 8 date, Davenport will also host holiday events on Independence Day, July 4, and Labor Day, September 5. The dates for Freeport are April 16, June 4 and August 11.

The two-night Late Model Showdown at Lakeside Speedway in Kansas City, KS, will coincide with NASCAR's Nextel Cup weekend events at the nearby Kansas Speedway, on

October 7-8.

The annual Late Model Nationals at Mid-Nebraska Speedway, near Doniphan, NE, are being expanded this year to two nights, Friday and Saturday, July 22-23. Friday night will feature a 25-lap, \$2,500-to-win main event, while the Saturday night action provides a 50-lap, \$6,000-to-win feature race.

Other facilities returning to the slate this season include Superior (WI) Speedway, which will host two series events this summer; Adams County Speedway in Corning, IA; I-35 Speedway in Mason City, IA; Echo Valley Speedway in West Union, IA; Park Jefferson Speedway in Jefferson, SD; and Deer Creek Speedway in Spring Valley, MN.

Other first-time WDRL venues include the Belleville (KS) High Banks; Hamilton County Speedway in Webster City, IA; Buena Vista Raceway in Alta, IA; and LaSalle (IL) Speedway.

"This year's schedule definitely illustrates how popular the (WDRL) has become," noted Wilson. "We started out with only 12 points races in our first year, 2001, and each year since then we have been able to expand the schedule."

According to Wilson, one or two additional dates still may be added to the schedule.

For car specifications, entry forms, information on scheduling a race or sponsorship opportunities for the World Dirt Racing League PolyDome Late Model Series, contact series founder and director Wilson at (660) 876-5632 or by e-mail at [worldraceleague@netzero.net](mailto:worldraceleague@netzero.net). The complete 2005 WDRL Late Model Series schedule will be included in CFRN's annual Race Fan Guide, to be published April 6.

## Aggressive Schedule Set for 2005 WoO Late Models

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO, Feb. 5 -- The second racing season for the World of Outlaws Late Model Series will feature a busy 53-date schedule in which the "Dirty Dozen" visits 37 speedways in 19 states.

The season will kick off Thursday, February 17, at Volusia Speedway Park in Barberville, FL, followed by a return engagement to the speedway on Saturday, February 19. The series' season will swing into full-force in April, with stops at Allegany County (MD) Speedway, Virginia (VA) Motor Speedway, Lernerville (PA) Speedway and Hagerstown (MD) Speedway.

May features visits to Atomic (TN) Motor Speedway, I-20 (SC) Speedway, Limaland (OH) Motorsports

Park, LaSalle (IL) Speedway, Brushcreek (OH) Motorsports Complex and Tri-State (IN) Speedway.

Ten dates fill the month of June, starting with a visit to Farley (IA) Speedway and followed by dates at Eagle (NE) Raceway, Dakota (SD) State Fair Speedway, Deer Creek (MN) Speedway, Cedar Lake (WI) Speedway, Ransomville (NY) Speedway, Fulton (NY) Speedway and Bridgeport (NJ) Speedway.

The July portion of the docket kicks off at Delaware (DE) International Speedway, followed by stops at Potomac (MD) Speedway, Hagerstown Speedway, Sharon (OH) Speedway, Memphis (TN) Motorsports Park, Tri-State (OK) Speedway, I-44 Speedway and Red River (ND) Valley Speedway.

September features events at Tri-City (PA) Speedway, Tri-City (IL) Speedway and I-55 (MO) Speedway. The 2005 campaign will wrap up in October with dates at West Virginia (WV) Motor Speedway and Kentucky Lake (KY) Motor Speedway.

The complete World of Outlaws Late Model Series schedule will be included in CFRN's Race Fan Guide, to be published with the April 6 issue.



### MINI-STOCKS

1-10: Chris Wilkerson, Bobby Morris, Buddy Jacoby, David Johnkin, Brad McKenzie, A.J. Horton, Doug Briggs, Josh Parrish, unknown, Josh Carter.

#### 440 SERIES

1-10: Danny Herrington, David Smith, Jason Revis, Jamie Hopkins, W.R. Revis, Michael Bean, Phillip Dickerson, Richard Bradley, Clayton Floyd, Derrick Jenkins.

11-12: Jeremy Crosby, Paul Deloach.

#### LATE MODELS

1-10: Robert Diekemper, Steve Kosiski, Ed Kosiski, Timmy Millwood, Branden Yawn, Glenn Yawn, Ricky Brant, Corey Fletcher, Lonnie Brant, Scott Shirley.

11-20: Bill Peters, A.J. Watson, Jonathan Joiner, Casey Barrow, Randall Clark, Skimp Henry, Jody Palmer, Todd Higdon, Crandall Turner, David Browning.

21-27: Mike Bruner, Jeremy Ledford, Buck Simmons, Brandon Ifft, Dusty Williams, Tommy Long, Donnie Bazemore.

#### SUPER STREET STOCKS

1-10: Brian Barnes, Chris Litchfield, Chris Casteel, Ricky Bozard, Kyle Livingood, Brian Trudell, Andy Logue, Dustin Smith, Andy Stalling, Brian White.

11-17: Albert Cosnahan, Rick Hunter, Ray Collins, Lloyd Williams, Al Wiggins, Sean Cloud, Jessie Roberson.

Open-Wheel Modifieds: Zack VanderBeek, New Sharon, IA; Adam Martin, Ada, OK; Craig Shuffield, Fayetteville, NC; Dylan Thompson, Paducah, KY; Branden Yawn, Rincon, GA; Jonathan Joiner, Milton, FL; A.J. Watson, Loganville, GA; Jordan Bland, Cambellsville, KY; Craig Shuffield, Fayetteville, NC; Matt Hubbard, Seaford, DE.

Open-Wheel Modifieds: Zack VanderBeek, New Sharon, IA; Adam Martin, Ada, OK; Craig Shuffield, Fayetteville, NC; Dylan Thompson, Paducah, KY; Branden Yawn, Rincon, GA; Jonathan Joiner, Milton, FL; A.J. Watson, Loganville, GA; Jordan Bland, Cambellsville, KY; Craig Shuffield, Fayetteville, NC; Matt Hubbard, Seaford, DE.

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Open-Wheel Modifieds: Zack VanderBeek, New Sharon, IA; Adam Martin, Ada, OK; Craig Shuffield, Fayetteville, NC; Dylan Thompson, Paducah, KY; Branden Yawn, Rincon, GA; Jonathan Joiner, Milton, FL; A.J. Watson, Loganville, GA; Jordan Bland, Cambellsville, KY; Craig Shuffield, Fayetteville, NC; Matt Hubbard, Seaford, DE.

Open-Wheel Modifieds: Zack VanderBeek, New Sharon, IA; Adam Martin, Ada, OK; Craig Shuffield, Fayetteville, NC; Dylan Thompson, Paducah, KY; Branden Yawn, Rincon, GA; Jonathan Joiner, Milton, FL; A.J. Watson, Loganville, GA; Jordan Bland, Cambellsville, KY; Craig Shuffield, Fayetteville, NC; Matt Hubbard, Seaford, DE.

Open-Wheel

## NASCAR Midwest Series Notebook:

**Midwest Series Grads Make Headlines**

**DAYTONA BEACH, FL, Feb. 4** -- Several former NASCAR AutoZone Elite Division, Midwest Series drivers find themselves in the news this year, led by 2003 NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series champion Travis Kvapil, who has jumped into the NASCAR Nextel Cup Series as the driver of Penske-Jasper Racing's number 77 car.

Kvapil, of Janesville, WI, spent the 1999-2000 seasons in the Midwest Series, where he recorded two wins and 15 top-five finishes in 31 starts before advancing to the Truck Series in 2001.

Clint Bowyer, a 2002 NASCAR Weekly Series regional champion and 2003 rookie-of-the-year contender in the Midwest Series, ran a limited NASCAR Busch Series schedule for Richard Childress Racing in 2004 and will step up to a full schedule in RCR's number 2 car in 2005. Bowyer posted four top-five finishes in 17 starts in his

Busch Series debut season.

Other former Midwest Series drivers to watch include Paul Menard, who returns for his second season the Busch Series as the driver of the number 11 car for Dale Earnhardt, Inc.; and Jamie McMurray, who raced on the Midwest Series in 1998-'99 and will attempt to earn a spot in the 2005 "Chase for the Championship" in Nextel Cup. In addition, McMurray will drive RWI Racing's number 64 car on a limited schedule in the Busch Series.

**Record year for Steve Carlson?** - Since NASCAR began sanctioning the Midwest Series (formerly ARTGO Challenge Series) in 1998, Steve Carlson has recorded 38 wins - an average of 5.4 wins per season. At this rate, Carlson will find himself on top of the Midwest Series all-time win list before too long. Carlson, a nine-time Series champion from West Salem, WI, has 65 career vic-

tories - just three wins shy of Dick Trickle's record of 68 wins.

**Defending title no easy feat for Diercks** - Since the Midwest Series' NASCAR era began in 1998, Carlson has been the leading driver in all categories. In addition to his 38 NASCAR wins, Carlson has won the Series championship in five of the past seven seasons.

Carlson's annual dominance was one reason why Justin Diercks' 2004 championship run was so impressive. As Diercks prepares to defend his title, here is one fact that will put the challenge in perspective: In 2000, the only other season since 1998 in which Carlson was not the reigning champion (Brian Hoppe won the honors in 1999), he regained the title by 207 points - the largest championship margin of his NASCAR career.

**Realignment Results in Five IMCA Mod Regions**

**VINTON, IA, Jan. 20** -- IMCA modifieds will compete in five regions this season.

The realignment from seven to five regions will be accomplished with mergers of the Western and Mountain regions, and the Northeastern and Gulf Coast regions. Payouts from the \$28,000 regional point fund will be adjusted accordingly, with the top ten drivers in each region earning shares of \$5,600.

Point standings had been kept and champions crowned in seven regions since 1995, with a \$4,000 point fund for the top five drivers in each.

Combining the regions will produce comparable numbers of drivers to the other remaining regions, resulting in a more equal points fund basis, according to IMCA vice-president of operations Brett Root.

The newly merged regions will be titled the Western and Eastern regions, respectively. Western Region director Paul Vetter and Mountain Region director Al Buschelman will be co-directors of the new Western Region, while Northeastern Region director Ed

Billings will be the sole director in the Eastern Region.

Several changes in geographical borders accompany the realignment:

- Western Colorado will be in the Western Region; the eastern half of the state moves to the Central Region;

- All of New Mexico and all of Louisiana will be in the South Central Region;

- Illinois moves from what had been the Northeastern Region to the North Central.

Regional and national standings will continue to be based on a driver's best 30 starts.

IMCA first experimented with designating tracks in various regions in the early 1980s, when sanctions existed in six different states. With sanctions from coast to coast by 1993, IMCA revived the concept and created five geographical regions. Several boundary changes were made when that number was expanded to seven ten years ago.

IMCA anticipates making an announcement on title sponsorship of the five regions in February.

**2005 IROC Driver Field Unveiled; Includes Kenseth, Seven '04 Champs**

**DAYTONA BEACH, FL, Jan. 19** -- Crown Royal International Race of Champions officials have announced their driver field for the 2005 IROC Series, which kicks off its 29th season on February 18 at Daytona International Speedway.

The invitational series will feature 12 champion drivers from different forms of auto racing in equally-prepared cars. The 2005 driver field will consist of seven drivers who captured their respective series championships in 2004.

Matt Kenseth, winner of two IROC events last season, is the defending series champion, while Mark Martin will make his 11th IROC appearance and seek a record-breaking fifth title to move ahead of Dale Earnhardt.

This year's champion will take home a \$1 million first-

place purse.

The 2005 IROC field includes Kenseth, '04 Nextel Cup Series champ Kurt Busch and Mark Martin from the NASCAR Nextel Cup Series; '04 Champ Car titlist Sébastien Bourdais; '04 NASCAR Truck Series champion Bobby Hamilton; '04 World of Outlaws sprint car champ Steve Kinser; '04 Grand American Road Racing Series co-champions Max Papis and Scott Pruett; '04 NASCAR Busch Series champion Martin Truex, Jr.; two-time Indianapolis 500 winner Helio Castroneves and '04 Indy 500 champ Buddy Rice from the IRL IndyCar Series; and 2001 World of Outlaws champion Danny Lasoski.

The IROC Series will consist of four races on diverse tracks, including one super-speedway, two intermediate tracks and one short track. Following the season-opener at Daytona, the series will shift to Texas Motor Speedway on April 15, followed by stops at Richmond (VA) International Raceway on September 8 and Atlanta (GA) Motor Speedway on October 29.

Wisconsin native Kenseth, winner of last year's final two IROC races at Richmond and Atlanta, finished the 2004 Nextel Cup season with eight top-five and 16 top-ten finishes on his way to an eighth-place finish in the Series' points standings.

Martin will attempt to add to his record four IROC titles (1994, '96-'98) and 11 IROC race wins as part of his "Salute To You" 2005 farewell season.

**Martin Announces Commemorative Brick Program**

**CONCORD, NC, January 7** -- Mark Martin grew up in Batesville, AR, where he dreamed of a life of stardom on the NASCAR circuit.

Today, Martin has plans for a museum that will be housed in Batesville at the sight of his brand new car dealership, where he plans to house each of his NASCAR trophies, select race cars and several other items he collected along his journey since leaving Arkansas in the late '70s.

"Batesville gave me a lot when I was growing up," said Martin recently, "and now I want to take all the things that I was fortunate to win over the years and bring them home for every-

one to see."

In order to share this return home with his fans, Martin has decided to start "The Road Home" commemorative brick program, where fans can share in and be a part of Martin's career and return to his roots. Those participating in "The Road Home" program will receive a free limited edition 1/24th-scale diecast car specially designed to commemorate the program. The collector car is valued at \$99.00 and can only be obtained by purchasing a brick paver.

For more information, visit <www.markmartinformercury.com>.



2004 Music City Motorplex champions honored at the track's annual awards banquet include (l-r) Scott Borchetta (super trucks), Wade Buttrey (late models) and Derrick Johnson (Grand National sportsman). (submitted photo)

**Drivers Honored at Music City Motorplex Champion's Banquet**

**NASHVILLE, TN, January 17** -- More than 300 people turned out to see the crowning of the 2004 Music City Motorplex champions Saturday night at the Stadium Club at Vanderbilt. Renowned Nashville sportscaster Rudy Kalis served as master of ceremonies, presenting more than 90 awards throughout the night.

The night's main attraction was the crowning of the 2004 champions. Wade Buttrey received the NASCAR late model champion's trophy, as part of a sixth-place finish in the NASCAR Weekly Series Sunbelt Region. The first-ever back-to-back NASCAR Super Trucks championship went to Scott Borchetta, who also won sixth place in the Sunbelt Region. The NASCAR Grand National Sportsman championship went to a deserving Derrick Johnson.

Special awards included the first annual Marty Robbins Award, presented to Jim Ed Norman for his dedication to the sport. Ricky Bolden picked up the 2004 Total Performance Team Player Award, and Dick Steagall picked up the Good Sportsman Award. The Crew Chief of the Year honor went to James Buttrey, and Terry Parks was recognized as the Mechanic of the Year.

LeRoy Binkley thanked his family and crew for aiding in his championship in the super stocks. Other Thursday champions honored were Jeff Letson (pro modifieds), Tommy Climer (late models), Kenny Summers (Legends master), Dillion Oliver (Legends

semi-pro), Edward Norman, Jr. (FrontRunners) and Nicholas Formosa (FrontRunners).

The youngest Saturday night champion, Josh Berry, was honored for his Junior FrontRunners championship, Formosa picked up another FrontRunners trophy, and Clint Ivey was awarded the championship in the Tennessee Street Outlaws division.

In the Legend cars, Jesse Carter won the Masters, Brad Morgan was tops in the pros, and Kevin Rollins was best in the Semi-Pro.

Some of the other drivers honored at the banquet included rookie of the year winners Ben Davis (junior FrontRunners), Davey Coble (FrontRunners), Chris Brachey (Legends), Ricky Groves (super stocks), Howard Tucker (Grand National Sportsman), Formosa (super trucks) and Willie Allen (NASCAR late models).

The 2004 Most Improved Driver award winners were Keith Krantz, Ronnie Campbell and Daniel Pope. The 2004 Young Gun Award went to Les Howell, who also picked up the "Big Wheeler" award for making the weekly trek from Muscle Shoals, AL. Super truck driver Michael Driscoll was awarded the "Big Roller" tire roller, and Keeton Hanks was recognized for his new track record in a Legends car.

Driver registration has been set for Saturday, March 12, at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds' Wilson Hall. Drivers may register for their 2005 numbers between 10 am and noon.

**IRA's Hunt Picks Up New Sponsor**

**RANDOLPH, WI, Feb. 4** -- 2004 IRA rookie of the year Andy Hunt has welcomed a new sponsor to his team. T&T Pools of Randolph have offered its support in the form of sponsorship for Hunt's number 9A in 2005.

"(Sponsor owners) Todd and Traci Smits have been sprint car racing fans for a long time, and they started their own business last year and have been pretty successful, so they wanted to help someone out," explained Hunt. "They approached me this winter around Christmas about helping out, and I couldn't be happier to have them on board with us."

"The demographics with the Interstate Racing Association is perfect for their market, and we are all looking forward to a good season in 2005."

T&T Pools deals in commercial and residential pools, hot tubs, and saunas, providing sales and service to most of Wisconsin, northern Illinois, eastern Iowa and Minnesota.

In addition, Hunt will work with American Race Tires and Real Wheels in 2005, and MDB and Associates will also join the team in 2005 as an associate sponsor. Hunt will race with the Interstate Racing Association Outlaw Sprint Series, as well as selected special shows, in 2005.

**All Stars Announce 2005 Schedule**

by Scott Hall

**CAMARGO, IL** -- The All Star Circuit of Champions sprint car series has posted an ambitious 61-race schedule for the 2005 season. A total of 48 races are confirmed at speedways in seven states, with another 13 race dates to be released as soon as signed contracts are received in the All Star office.

New to the schedule this year are four tracks - the Sand Mountain Speedway in Ft. Meade, FL; the Owensburg (IN) Speedway; the Brush Creek Motorsports Park in Peebles, OH; and the Fowlerville (MI) Fairgrounds. Returning to the All Star schedule after several years' absence are five tracks - Ohio Valley Speedway, near Parkersburg, WV, last hosted

the All Stars in 1991; the series last visited Raceway 7 in Conneaut, OH, in 1994; the last Williams Grove Speedway All Star event was in 2003; Skyline Speedway in Stewart, OH; last hosted the series in 1998; and the last Benton (MO) Speedway was in 2003.

The season opens with a four-day show at Volusia Speedway Park in Barberville, FL, on Feb. 8, 9, 10 and 12. Other mainstays of the All Star schedule include the Attica Raceway Park Spring Nationals, the Sharon Nationals and the Lawrenceburg Speedway Hoosier Fall Classic.

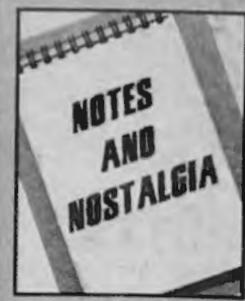
Ohio Speedweek is set for eight nights of action starting June 25 at Eldora and running on consecutive nights at

Attica, Wayne County, Raceway 7, Sharon, Fremont, Limaland and K-C Raceway. The annual "Thunder Through the Plains" tour, during the week following the Knoxville Nationals, will be held once again, with the tracks participating to be announced later this season.

St. Francois Co. Speedway in Farmington, MO; Hartford Speedway Park, Butler Battlegrounds, Lincoln, West Virginia Motor Speedway, Port Royal and Lernerville will also host events this season.

The complete 2005 All Star Sprint Series schedule will be included in CFRN's annual Race Fan Guide, to be published April 6. For more information, call (217) 352-9221.

## Notes & Nostalgia



The familiar cry of "slow 'em down" was rumbling through NASCAR after the 1964 season when three drivers - Jimmy Pardue, Joe Weatherly and Fireball Roberts - all perished in accidents. For 1965, NASCAR, never one to sit around merely moaning about a problem, imposed a general displacement limit of 428 cubic inches and banned the Chrysler "hemi" and Ford "hi-riser" engines from superspeedways. Carburetors were limited to one four-barrel with a one-and-11/16th-inch maximum opening.

Ford praised the new rules, but Chrysler picked up its toys, citing lack of sufficient notice, and decided to run its hemis in USAC and other places. USAC was allowing the powerful engines on the grounds that it preferred to give its people and the manufacturers one year's notice on any changes. Big Bill France scorned that idea, saying that the manufacturers wouldn't let him know what they were intending to build anyway. The top Chrysler drivers, notably Richard Petty and Buck Baker, nixed USAC, claiming that USAC didn't pay enough. Petty took a Plymouth Barracuda drag racing. Baker went to General Motors products before eventually returning to Chrysler. Bobby Isaacs, David Pearson and Paul Goldsmith went with Chrysler to USAC. France hoped that GM would take up the Chrysler slack, but GM had just endured a fierce strike and rated racing low on its priority list.

Riverside ran in January with no factory Plymouths or Dodges. Fords, led by Dan Gurney, swept the first eight positions and nine of the top ten. Late in the race, A.J. Foyt, experiencing brake failure, left the track in turn 9; his Banjo Matthews Ford catapulted 50 feet in the air, then landed on its roof. With the possible exception of his 1990 crash at Road America, it was the worst accident of his career; he suffered a broken back, damaged aorta, punctured lung, fractured left heel, and numerous bruises.

At Daytona Ford dominated even more, with Lorenzen leading a parade of 12 other Fords.

On February 28 Petty drew a track-record crowd at Southeastern Dragway in Dallas, GA. In a match against Arnie Beswick, Petty's car crashed into a dirt embankment, catapulted a wire fence and nosed down into a spectator area. Typically, Petty's first concern when rescue workers reached him was for the people he had hit; one of Petty's wheels had come off and fatally injured eight-year-old Wayne Dye of Austell, GA, and seven others were injured.

Ned Jarrett won three of the next four races at the dirt short tracks of Spartanburg and Hillsboro and the paved half-mile at Weaverville. Junior Johnson won at Richmond, which was still a dirt track.

The lack of Chrysler participation lowered attendance. The Daytona 500 was down to 58,682 from 69,738 the previous year. Promoters were restless, even talking of terminating their NASCAR contracts. France saw relief with car builder Ray Fox building a pair of 1965 Chevrolets with financial backing from Chevrolet dealer and 1960 Indy 500 winner Jim Rathmann. Rathmann, a sage businessman, stirred anger - and interest - by stating that Fords were winning races only because they didn't run fast enough to blow up. Rathmann requested help from other Chevy dealers; he received few (and weak) responses.

Fox couldn't build his Chevys fast enough for the April

Atlanta race. Ford swept 16 of the first 17 finishing spots; a young Buddy Baker snuck his '64 Dodge into fifth, prompting his proud father to promise Buddy a Chevy. Marvin Panch, suffering from a sore neck, sought relief from Wood Brothers teammate A.J. Foyt, whose car broke earlier. Foyt brought the Panch Ford home in first place - less than three months after his devastating Riverside crash.

After Atlanta, Fords won five short track races, at Greenville, North Wilkesboro, Martinsville, Columbia and Bristol, with Dick Hutcherson, Junior Johnson, Fred Lorenzen, Tiny Lund and Johnson again the winners.

The father-son duo of Buddy and Buck Baker finished sixth and tenth, respectively, at the "Rebel 300" in Darlington to prevent a Ford sweep of the top ten. Buddy was in a Dodge, Buck in a Chevy. Junior Johnson won the race. Ned Jarrett won at Langley Field before Johnson doubled up at Bowman Gray Stadium and Hickory, before the controversy at the World 600.

The Fox Chevys finally arrived, but after LeeRoy Yarbrough practiced a few laps, his Chevy failed tech inspection and was banned from qualifying. This prompted a closed-door meeting with the promoters (Richard Howard and A.C. Goines, not Bruton Smith and Humpy Wheeler) and Bill France.

Yarbrough was allowed to start 44th. He thrilled the crowd on race day with a charge up into the top ten but went out after 309 laps with engine problems. None of the Chevys managed to lead the race, which was won by Fred Lorenzen.

Chevys were suffering a similar fate in USAC, except Chrysler products were dominating. The first 11 races (of 16 total) were won by Dodges and Plymouths, with Norm Nelson taking five of those wins. A Ford did not win until after Labor Day, when Foyt (of course) won at the Hoosier Fairgrounds. Don White added the other Ford win at Mid-America. Nelson also won the last USAC race of the season at Hanford. NASCAR-famous Bobby Isaac won two USAC races that season, at the Springfield Fairgrounds and at Illinois.

Chevy's lack of competitiveness displeased Les Richter, general manager of Riverside. Richter challenged USAC and NASCAR to sit down and resolve their differences for the general good. Surprisingly, both sides agreed: USAC's Henry Banks and Bill France met in the then-neutral territory of New York City and did, in fact, agree to similar rules for their respective stock car divisions.

The rules, however, were a compromise that didn't satisfy Chrysler, who delayed its return until late July. This prompted a summit meeting in Atlanta in late July among France and several promoters. The promoters convinced France that there was only one way to cure the fans' ill will - and reluctance to buy tickets. That was to bring back Curtis Turner.

France had been seriously angry with Turner since 1961, when Turner had attempted to enlist his fellow drivers into a Teamsters Union affiliate. France had sniffed out (probably correctly) that part of Turner's deal with the Teamsters involved parimutuel betting at NASCAR tracks. Unionization and betting were two viper pits that France would have no part of. France successfully thwarted Turner and banned him and his accomplice Tim Flock from racing in NASCAR.

Turner was racing in the "outlaw" Grand American Racing Association at Concord Speedway. When Darlington's Bob Colvin called him with the news, Turner left as soon as he could, stating that he felt like he had just gotten out of jail.

The politics had not stopped Junior Johnson and Jarrett from continuing to win on the short tracks. Jarrett added another three wins and Johnson added one before the next big-track

race at Atlanta. There, Jarrett and Johnson had to settle for third and fourth behind the Fords of Marvin Panch and Darel Dieringer. Buddy Baker upheld Dodge's honor with a fifth-place run.

Dick Hutcherson won two in a row at the South Carolina tracks in Greenville and Myrtle Beach. Cale Yarborough, then 24 years old, won his first Grand National race at the half-mile dirt in Valdosta in a Ford.

Foyt made his comeback official and complete at the Firecracker 400 on July 4 at Daytona by beating Buddy Baker's non-factory Plymouth Fury. Foyt's Ford was the only one of seven factory-entered Fords that finished, as a host of wrecks eliminated many contenders. Nevertheless, Foyt's victory was his first solo win of any kind following his Riverside accident.

We've heard many complaints about too much traveling and too many races on the current Nextel Cup schedule. In 1965, after the Firecracker, GN races were contested at Manassas, VA, on July 8 and Old Bridge, NJ, on July 9. The circuit then raced at Islip, NY, on July 14 and Watkins Glen on July 18. Junior Johnson won the first two and Panch the latter two. Old Bridge and Islip both paid \$1,000 even to win. Johnson's win was his tenth of the season, but Dick Hutcherson, with four wins, held the points lead. (Sound familiar?) Jarrett then supplanted Hutcherson by beating him at Bristol.

Petty ended Ford's 32-race win streak with a Plymouth win at Nashville. It was win number 37 on his road to 200 and came on the last day of July - also the date France reinstated Curtis Turner. Eight days later, Petty added another win at Weaverville, but not before another race was won by Jarrett at Shelby.

The number of races today's racers complain about - 38 - was reached on August 13 at Marysville and exceeded the next day (and the day after) by races at Spartanburg and Augusta. Hutcherson won two of these and Jarrett one.

The circuit took three days off before a returned David Pearson won at Columbia. We suspect the drivers and crews drove between the different tracks. The purses, many of which paid \$1,000 to win and \$100 for last certainly didn't contribute much to the purchase of private jet aircraft.

We include ourselves among those who pine for the "good ol' days" of NASCAR and the return of North Wilkesboro, Rockingham and Darlington to the schedule. We should all note that Ned Jarrett won the 1965 Southern 500 at Darlington by 14 laps over Buck Baker's Plymouth; Dieringer broke after 345 of the 364 laps but still finished third. Turner's return resulted in his starting eighth but going out after 51 laps with a wheel-bearing problem on his Plymouth. Turner was in a Junior Johnson Ford for the next race and with the Wood Brothers by the end of September.

On October 17 Turner shadowed a dueling trio of Lorenzen, Foyt and Dieringer at Charlotte until six laps from the finish; Foyt then tried too hard, clipped a guard rail and spun. Lorenzen won and Jarrett clinched the championship with fourth place. It was the 52nd race of the season.

It all came together for Turner in the inaugural Rockingham race on Halloween. Turner beat a charging Cale Yarborough for his 17th career win, but his first since 1959. Attendance was 35,000, and Turner received \$13,090 for winning.

Jarrett topped off the season with his 50th Grand National win and 13th of the year. Junior Johnson tied that number and, coincidentally, was also tied with Jarrett for the total number of Grand National wins, at 50. Johnson, running 18 fewer races than Jarrett, was 12th in the point standings.

## Ed Reichert

### Reichert's Ramblings



The recent awards banquet of the Red Cedar Racing Association provided some bits of information about the upcoming race season.

Young Jake Hartung, who has labored in the modified class for the last couple seasons trying to make some elderly equipment perform, will have an opportunity to step up

his program with a new car for the '05 racing season.

Also looking forward to the new mod season will be Todd Siddons, who will also have a new car. Siddons, whose last couple of seasons have been marked by consistent and strong performances, will make a change for this year by using a spec motor for the first time, from Dave Adams' garage. Siddons will also be helping Kenny Davis get his new program off to a strong start. Davis, who has been a long-time runner in super stocks, has purchased Siddons' car from last year and will give the mods a whirl.

Cory Mahder will remain in super stocks for another year, but for the first time in two years he will start the season with a new car, from Mark Resch's shop. Cory's cousin Chad and his dad Duane are a bit uncertain about what 2005 will bring. They still have their two cars from last year but are trying to sell at least one of them. They may return with the same cars as last year, but if they can move one of them there may be a new chassis on the horizon for them.

Meanwhile, Duane will be helping rookie late model driver Steve Hucovski get his season started. Hucovski has obtained an aluminum motor and plans to go to Florida to get some seat time. Mahder has been told to bring his driver's suit also, as Hucovski may ask him to slide behind the wheel on occasion.

The Rice Lake ice racing season is in full swing, and while I haven't been able to free up a Saturday as yet to check out the action, I'm told the car counts have been good and the racing

### Gilliland Opens GN West Season with PIR Win

PHOENIX, AZ, Jan. 30 -- Second-generation competitor David Gilliland began his march toward the NASCAR Grand National Division, West Series championship this year by using lapped traffic to slip by Kevin Harvick and pull away to win the season-opening United Rentals 100 at Phoenix International Raceway on Sunday.

While the Series' 2004 Rookie of the Year was cruising to victory, Harvick had to make a quick pit stop for a splash of fuel, resulting in a 13th-place finish for the NASCAR Nextel Cup

Series star and former West Series champion.

Gilliland won the pole for the race, with a qualifying lap of 127.461 mph, but Harvick set the pace for much of the race, leading the first 77 circuits. Gilliland eventually closed the gap and took advantage of lapped traffic to move out front, then opted to conserve fuel once he had the lead.

Defending series champion Mike Duncan of Bakersfield, CA, turned in his best finish at Phoenix with a second-place effort, while Jason Jefferson of Naches, WA, was third. Mike

David of Modesto, CA, was fourth, followed by Brandon Ash of Umpqua, WA.

Open-wheel star Michel Jourdain, Jr., of Mexico City made his NASCAR debut with a sixth-place finish, followed by NASCAR Grand National Division, Busch North Series regulars Matt Kobyluck and Dale Quarterley, in seventh and eighth, respectively. Steve Portenga finished ninth and Scott Lynch was tenth.

Gilliland's margin of victory was 2.823 seconds, at an average speed of 198.532 mph. The pace of the event was slowed by just one caution for five laps.

### Menards, Johns Manville to Sponsor Meira in 2005

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, January 12 -- Menards Home Improvement Center and Johns Manville will sponsor the number 17 car driven by Vitor Meira during the 2005 IRL IndyCar Series season, officials with Rahal Letterman Racing have announced.

The partnership also reunites Menards with Meira, who drove several events with Team Menard in 2002 and '03.



Ice racing takes over for dirt track racing in the Rice Lake, WI, area during the winter months, as seen by these scenes from recent racing action.

(Doug Zimmer photos)

Congratulations go out to Madsen for being named recently for induction to the Superior Speedway Hall of Fame.

Red Cedar Speedway has finalized its pure stock rules for 2005. Only street-replacement OEM shocks will be allowed, and there will be a \$40 claim on all four shocks. They will allow any DOT tire.

Elsewhere in this issue is a very interesting piece Paul Pittman recently wrote on the Brian Coleman racing team. Coleman, from Cameron, WI, had several different drivers in his 410 sprinter last year, including Brent Laursen and Jimmy Kourba, but his new driver for 2005 is Billy Balog. Billy hails from Fairbanks, AK, where he raced primarily 360 sprints. His



Ice racing takes over for dirt track racing in the Rice Lake, WI, area during the winter months, as seen by these scenes from recent racing action.

(Doug Zimmer photos)

Speaking of the IRA, a phone call to Dale Bisonette of the Rice Lake Speedway just before press time revealed that the Speedway has reached a tentative agreement to host its first-ever 410 sprint car race since the track was reconfigured a number of years ago. They are waiting final confirmation of the date, but from their end they are a go as soon as everything is confirmed by IRA. Event sponsorship has already been secured. The first-ever appearance of a nationally touring sprint car series to the local oval could be quite an attraction. No word on what class(es) will join the sprints on that night.

## Racin' Around Titletown



Construction will begin this spring on a brand new, \$1.6 million-dollar multi-purpose race track, complete with an egg-shaped, third-mile paved oval and a snocross track in the infield, in Watersmeet, Michigan. Former late model driver and Dickinson County Racing Association president John Ostermann has been hired by the Lac Vieux Desert tribe to help design the facility, which is being built at the present

site of a snowmobile track located across from the tribe's gaming hall off Highway 2 in Watersmeet, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The track, which is located on land on the Lac Vieux Desert reservation, is one hour and ten minutes from Norway, MI, and a nearly two-hour drive from Green Bay.

"The closest tracks up there are Eagle River and Three Lakes, and Ashland isn't too far away," said Ostermann. "They are all dirt tracks. Some folks are saying the dirt guys won't convert their cars. I said the same thing when Norway was paved in 1979. I think a paved track will be best in the long run, especially with the casino right across the street. They don't need a dust problem."

While it's not a 100-percent guarantee that the track will be paved, Ostermann said he will sit down with the tribal council and Coleman Engineering of Iron Mountain and discuss detailed plans for the facility.

"This facility will be used year-round, and not just for weekly racing," said Ostermann. "We're talking music festivals, monster-truck shows, stock cars, demolition derbies, snowmobile races, you name it."

Ostermann said if the track will be paved it could happen as early as this summer. "They already wanted to race weekly up here, but I suggested one special a month this year," said Ostermann, who said the track would likely run on Saturday nights if paved, with super late models, super stocks and four-cylinders - identical divisions to those that run at Norway on Friday nights. "Nearly all of the U.P. drivers I've talked to say they'd support this deal."

One concern Ostermann has is the lack of a heavily-populated city nearby. "That is a concern, but the goal is to feed off of the folks that filter into the casino. We're hard at work. I just ordered bleachers and we'll have seating for up to 3,000 people. For our specials this summer, if it's paved I'd bring in a MARS series late model race, or maybe even a Wisconsin Challenge Series race or something like that."

Ostermann said he'd personally like to return to late model racing again someday. "I've got to get a teaching job again first before I do that. I'd like to buy a crate motor and run as a limited (late model) at WIR, but that will be a while away. I did buy an IMCA stock car and plan on running down at the tracks in the Green Bay area, or maybe even make it legal to run at Eagle River. I might even get an IMCA modified and race it in Wisconsin."

This scribe will continue to follow the progress of this story as it develops.

Gary Vercauteran must like having a lot on his plate. The veteran race promoter who oversees the MARS late model and Mid-Am truck and stock car series has decided to take on yet another project - one that's drawing calls from all over the place.

With the demise of the ASA national touring series Vercauteran, at the prompting of several ASA teams, will administer a new series out of his Baileys Harbor home.

"The calls have come from mainly the Midwest, but a few from down south too," said Vercauteran, who is looking at a schedule of possibly eight to ten races at paved ovals in the Midwest. "Obviously a few of the bigger-name drivers won't be running, but there are plenty of cars in the Milwaukee-Madison area, as well as Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. These guys have a lot of money tied up in their equipment, and it would be real tough to sell. We're trying to give them something."

Obviously the payouts will most likely not be anything close to what they competed for in ASA's heyday. But it is expected track operators will be understanding of the entire situation that happened to what was once the most prominent short-track series in America, helping launch the careers of Mark Martin, Rusty Wallace and Dick Trickle, just to name a few.

The naming of veteran crew chief Howie Lettow as chairman of the competition committee should bring some credibility to what Vercauteran's trying to do. With his other series I think the key to making this work is to have enough support staff at each show. According to a list released by Vercauteran, representatives from 56 different teams have contacted him with questions about the new series. This was before their meeting last weekend in Janesville.

The soon-to-be-renamed Seymour Tri-Oval Raceway has scheduled a tentative opener of Sunday night, May 22. A practice is slated for May 15. However, in light of the current track conditions many doubt if that will take place. Recently a unanimous vote was taken by NEW Dirt club members to stockpile new clay and put it on the recently reconfigured oval this spring. However, one of the board members apparently took it upon himself to put the clay on the track over the snow, which has upset quite a few people.

"We'll be lucky if we'll be racing by the end of June," said one NEW Dirt board member. "There are no lights, no fencing, no guard rail. Things are a mess right now."

Among the new names being tossed around for the now high-banked, third-mile clay oval are Cyclone Raceway or Cyclone Speedway.

A little birdie tells us that a group of five investors are possibly looking into reviving racing at Dodge County Fairgrounds in Beaver Dam. Recently the Dodge County Fair board decided not to host a weekly show this season because of dying attendance.

The light bulb must have gone on with these folks, because they want to race on Sunday nights, with IMCA sanctioning. It's

## Joe Verdegan

a well-known fact that for years "Big Beaver" has butted heads with Powercom Park's third-mile, which is just a few miles up the road from the Fairgrounds. For years both tracks ran on Saturday nights, thinning both car and fan counts. The Sunday night show makes sense.

The Wisconsin Dirt Late Model Association (WDLMA) will be employing time trials for both their weekly shows at Powercom and Oshkosh, as well as the special events slated for Luxemburg, Sturgeon Bay and Wilmot. An invert will be used via the roll of the die. The series is geared towards curbing the costs of maintaining a dirt late model, with use of a spec motor being encouraged by the series.

Shawano Speedway has pushed its season opener back one week, to Saturday, April 16. "Like the other (area) tracks, we're just tired of fighting the cold weather early in the season," said race director Dale Hodkiewicz. "Last year our first two months were out toughest in terms of attendance. We really did well in July and August, and that's what really helped bail us out."

Green Bay's Eddie Muenster will let his asphalt late model collect dust this summer, as he's decided not to compete at Wisconsin International Raceway in Kaukauna this season. "Basically I need a motor, and the costs are just too much," said Muenster. "For a lot less I can race my IMCA modified at a lot of different tracks in this area."

Both Eddie and his dad Jerry will be returning to Luxemburg Speedway's Friday night show full-time in 2005. Jerry recently returned from Florida, where he placed tenth and 12th in the Panhandle Nationals at Blackman Speedway, a soup bowl of a quarter-mile clay oval.

It appears a three-race United States Touring Modified Series swing will take place in Wisconsin, including a pair of stops in northeast Wisconsin. The series heads up the Door County peninsula for a first-ever appearance at Thunderhill Raceway on Wednesday, June 22, then comes back to Luxemburg the following night before heading to Fox Ridge Speedway in western Wisconsin. Last year Luxemburg hosted a show, which drew 37 modifieds. It was a stout field, with Kelly Schryock winning, but only a half-dozen series regulars showed.

"With a three-day swing you'll probably draw more series regulars," said Seymour's Brian Mullen, who plans on running the three shows. "Each show pays \$2,000 to win and \$200 to start. With Luxemburg's solo show last year, not as many guys were willing to tow that far for just one show. I think it will be a pretty good deal this year."

Northeastern Wisconsin lost another racing legend recently. Corby VanLorynen passed away at the age of 72. Van Lorynen was a regular competitor on the Shawano-Seymour-DePere half-mile dirt circuit in the 1960s and competed for more than 20 years with the number 86. VanLorynen is survived by his wife Marcie and his children.

## North Tundra Racing Beat



It seems that in my last column I was wrong - something that never happens! (LOL, to use a computer-speak phrase.) It seems that I do have time to slip in a column in February, so I will do so on the eve of our departure for the (hopefully) sunny South.

Joanne and I did attend the ABC Raceway awards banquet, and a good time apparently was had by all! We also attended the Superior Speedway awards banquet on January 29; a piece on that banquet should also be in this edition.

As I mentioned last time, there was some movement toward signing the lease on the speedway. I attended two Speedway Board of Directors meetings during January and was afforded the chance to see the lease that the County was trying to convince the Board sign. At the first meeting the Board unanimously voted to reject the lease as it was presented, deeming it unacceptable.

Some of the Board members later attended a Douglas County Board Committee of the Whole meeting, where they were able to hammer out an agreement to bring back to the track Board. After some discussion the Speedway Board voted unanimously to accept the new lease. By press time this lease has most likely been signed and the Board will push ahead trying to find a new promoter/manager to operate the facility while working on setting the schedule and finding someone to prepare and maintain the track.

The 2004 promoters, Butch and Linda Erickson, resigned and will not be involved (at this point) with the race track. The

Board spent more than an hour trying to get them to change their minds but the Ericksons were adamant, so the Board reluctantly accepted their resignation.

It is now time for everyone involved to stop being "pro-Butch and Linda," since that is not an option anymore, and become "pro-Speedway" and work to at least maintain what the Ericksons started, find a new promoter/manager and push ahead.

I have referred to the Superior Speedway Board numerous times. Perhaps it is time to introduce the nine-member group that has been put through hell over the past 15 months by the Fair Board manager and certain of the Douglas County Board. These people have a love of racing and of the Superior Speedway that surpasses all understanding - especially when you take into consideration that this group is an unpaid volunteer Board who put their collective butts on the line so that the Speedway will survive. The Board is headed by president Rob Miller, who also doubles as a tech inspector on race night; vice-president Harlow Filteau, who serves as race director; and secretary-treasurer Joyce Klick, who also works the backstretch concessions. Other Board members include Katie Birdseye, Rob Ghyselinck, Tom Stewart (also a County Board member), Cindy Bloomquist, who does a huge amount of work; and drivers Rick Rivord and Al Uotinen. I believe this hard-working group will continue intact for 2005, though at least one of them tried to resign but rescinded their resignation when it was apparent that things would go forward.

Really, I think these hard workers just don't want to give up. They want to see where this all leads now that they have ascertained that the light at the end of the tunnel is, in fact, not an oncoming train!

## Winston Adds IMCA-Sanctioned Mods This Year, Stocks in '06

WINSTON, MO, Jan. 26 -- One IMCA division returns to Winston Speedway this season, while a second sanctioned class is primed to join Saturday evening shows there in 2006.

IMCA modifieds are back on the Winston card beginning with opening night action on April 16, with national, regional and state points races continuing through September 3. IMCA stock cars will hop on board next year.

Season championship night at the 3/8th-mile semi-banked clay oval, co-owned and promoted by partners Ted Morgan and Gene Stigall, is September 17. Stigall will race a modified at Des Moines and Stuart, IA, this season.

Because of its geographical location, Winston Speedway will be considered a "border track," meaning

drivers can designate points earned there to apply in IMCA's Central Region or North Central Region standings.

Along with the points situation, the biggest reason the promoters decided to sanction was IMCA's rules designed to hold down motor costs. Costs of fielding competitive cars, and rules also figured in the decision to add IMCA stock cars next year.

No major projects are planned at the track in the off-season, but one significant absence Stigall noted will be the hackberry tree by the concession stand, where drivers' meetings were held. The tree was a casualty of a recent ice storm.

Sanctioned mods ran at Winston two previous seasons - in 1998, when the track was called Missouri's I-35 Speedway, and in 2001.

## Hemelgarn Returns to IndyCar Series with Dana as Driver

INDIANAPOLIS, IN -- Ron Hemelgarn, who won the 2000 IRL IndyCar Series title and 1996 Indianapolis 500 as a team owner, returns full-time to the Series with Paul Dana behind the wheel for the 17-race season.

Hemelgarn, an entrepreneur in fitness and financial industries, has been involved in racing since sponsoring the cars of Dick Simon (1978-'79), Spike Geilhausen and Josele Garza (1980). He purchased the Primus team in 1984 and created Hemelgarn Racing, and the team made an immediate imprint on the IndyCar Series, with Buddy Lazier starting from the pole position in the inaugural race on January 27, 1996. Lazier also was behind the wheel for the victory in Indy later that year and for the Series title. The team was runner-up in the series standings in 2001.

Hemelgarn, a Dayton, OH, native, ran Lazier in the Indianapolis 500 last May in a joint business venture.

Dana was runner-up in the 2004 IRL Menards Infiniti Pro Series standings. He started either on the front or second row in ten of the 12 Pro Series races in '04, including a pole starting position in the opener at Homestead-Miami Speedway. He had one victory, at The Milwaukee Mile, and seven top-five finishes. He recorded six top-ten finishes in ten starts in 2003 with Kenn Hardley Racing and Brian Stewart Racing.

Dana follows in a line of successful drivers who have competed under the Hemelgarn banner, including Scott Brayton (1985-'89), Gordon Johncock ('88-'89, '91-'92), Tom Sneva ('88), Stan Fox ('91-'95), Billy Vukovich III ('89-'90), Arie Luyendyk ('87), Rich Vogler ('87), Davey Hamilton ('91, '95), Stephan Gregoire ('96), Lyn St. James ('97), and Johnny Unser ('97-'99).

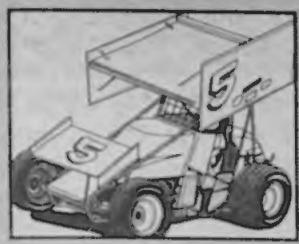
## Gregg Rejoins Schmidt Motorsports for 2005

INDIANAPOLIS, IN -- Travis Gregg, of Camden, OH, has been named to join Sam Schmidt Motorsports to drive in the IRL Menards Infiniti Pro Series in 2005.

Gregg contested three races with the team in 2004 - he qualified on the pole at Kentucky and led 57 laps before finishing fifth, and he started on the front row at Chicagoland and at Texas, where he finished the season with a second-place run.

Sam Schmidt Motorsports captured the Pro Series championship in 2004 with Thiago Medeiros.

## The Infield



Whether or not to classify Shoestring Racing's "Wisconsin Racer's Swapmeet" a success rests solely with its promoters, but to the visitors one thing seemed clearly evident. Winter's clutches do nothing more than fuel the desire to get cars back on the race tracks. The buildings were full of vendors, consisting of companies, tracks and individual race teams all showing off their new items as well as peddling their used to other racers looking for deals. The meet did what it was supposed to; by offering a forum to bring together those with and those wanting, everyone met to see what was available and, more importantly, to visit with one another, discuss plans and reminisce of days gone by. Regardless of what was perceived, the idea of bringing a bunch of racers together for anything in the middle of winter is always a good thing.

For my part, I was able to meet with many different people and accomplish many things that I otherwise would have had to travel all over the state to do. I was also able to meet with various members of the media and pick their brains on issues as well as catch up with everyone on just what was going on since the ovals fell silent for 2004. It's funny, sometimes, just how similar ideas are that different people have that, unless they start talking, would otherwise go unnoticed and untried.

Case in point: Paul Kuyawa and I discussed several issues concerning fans, ranging from an overall approach to entertainment to watching parents carrying their young ones to the car, fast asleep, long before the night's activities were over. What we agreed was a specific pet peeve for both of us, and we also agreed that a more conscious effort has to be made to avoid them, was long programs. Face it. If weather becomes a factor, miraculously a program is rushed through, often to its completion. So consider that if things like that can be done under those circumstances, then why can't a quickly-run program be the norm instead of the "miracle"? Many tracks do make conscious efforts to construct a nightly agenda, but more often than not it is abandoned shortly after the engines begin to fire. How to combat this is the big question.

Several ideas were thrown back and forth, but one thing was sure, and it's a theme that I have heard tossed around before - more often as a threat than anything. When it costs someone money, things will get done. In other words, there needs to be consequences for actions that work against the common goal. And threats that are not carried out for whatever reason eventually become nothing more than a joke. Hit those responsible in the pocketbook - prove that you mean business - and suddenly you get results.

The downside, of course, will be the negativity faced by those who enforce from those who violate - much like I expect from simply mentioning it. It is why, I believe, things just aren't done. There are too many people trying to be everyone's

friend, and in the process nothing gets done to improve the initial problem. Call it politics, but a quick look in the mirror will see us all guilty of it. Fixing problems often lead to ended friendships - something many workplace supervisors out there are all too familiar with.

Why then do I say something now? Because, as I have said in my columns before, I am tired of fielding complaints from angry fans looking to focus their frustrations on someone and looking for an answer that is often not what they want to hear. It's easy in the pit area to avoid these complaints, because those folks with said frustrations have already left. Therefore, if you hear nothing, then it stands to reason that there is no problem. Blind faith gets you nowhere.

Well, I guess I have vented enough here, and, hell, I don't even know how I got started in this direction. But it doesn't matter, because as we all get ready for the upcoming season, it is something that needs to be addressed and can be fixed as part of a planning measure before the snow even melts.

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**News and notes from the infield:** John Haeni and his team were on hand at the swap meet with many of their items from the 2004 season and a renewed optimism for 2005. "We are looking back to our 2002 championship season and want to make what worked then even better," stated Haeni. "Starting with the new chassis we won at the IRA banquet. We named it 'Constantine,' for consistency. We look at it as a good omen in that we already have a win with it, simply by winning it." As for the reported new look for '05, John indicated that in keeping with the team's focus and emulation of the 2002 championship run, look for a retro look for the machine, with a few twists.

2004 IRA champion Scotty Neitzel had his booth adjacent to the IRA booth (makes sense to me) and was in good spirits, still enjoying his title. To anyone who thinks that winning a title doesn't mean anything, think again! "So much of the pressure is off of us now," stated Neitzel. "We did it, and I am really looking forward to 2005 and enjoying the season." But for crew chief and 2004 IRA Mechanic of the Year Rick Lemanski, it was still all business. With tape measure in hand, Rick greeted visitors and customers with all of the pride and professionalism expected from a championship team.

Scott Uttech had his Trinity Racing number 7 on display at the IRA booth, along with a pre-release look at the 2005 IRA racing schedule (expect an official release within the week). "We're still looking (for sponsors)," stated Uttech, who had a promising season in 2004 despite the lack of funding. He is hopeful of putting together some type of deal to allow him to run the full season. "Businesses are very cautious," stated car owner Theresa Uttech, "and it is increasingly harder to find those sponsorship dollars. Scott has so much potential, but there are so many businesses that have been burned by past relationships with race teams that they are not even willing to talk to anyone anymore. We'll keep looking, but unless something does come together, I just don't know how we can do it on

## Paul Pittman

our own again." Theresa's sentiment is one that is all too often heard today. Too many businesses that once dreamed of reaching greatness on the wings of a race team have watched their sponsorship dollars fade away with idle promises.

Jason Johnson also shares a sense of optimism looking at 2005, with a new product package deal and the return of loyal sponsors. The team is also changing chassis manufacturers for 2005, and Jason seems ready to push off and go racing tomorrow.

Donny Goeden is reportedly seeking a full-time ride for 2005 again. Although I have not been contacted by anyone at the Goeden race shop, the Schriff Racing effort has teamed up with Rick Kelsey for a legitimate shot at the IRA tour in 2005. Rick's longtime sponsors and friends are all on board again for the effort, and while it's unclear just what number will adorn the wing - Rick's 11K or Don Schriff's 9 - one thing's for sure. There's another gunslinger on the doorstep, and I don't think he's going to bother knocking at the door and waiting to come in. Rick has already proven himself a very capable pilot and just needed the extra help to make a statement. With Don's help, this effort could be one to watch.

Expect nine-time IRA champ Joe Roe to compete more often as well in 2005. Motor problems kept the champ sidelined for more shows than he cared for in 2004, and apparently every effort is being made to eliminate that from happening again. FATTFRO Motorsports will once again be a big part of Roe's efforts, and if history has taught us one thing, it's watch out for the number 61 - he'll be coming to the front sooner or later.

Jimmy Kouba will be back as well in 2005, but he will be behind the wheel of his own number 2K. Spending 2004 helping friend Brian Coleman get his operation pointed in the right direction really sparked Jimmy's desire to put the 410 under the hood and go on the road as much as possible with the IRA. Jimmy's long list of accomplishments cements his name in the rich Kouba racing history, but being the racer that he is, he wants more. Of course, anyone who knows Jimmy or his older brother Joe know that with one you usually get the other, so watch for the number 55 to be more frequent as well. Things are really starting to take shape up in western Wisconsin and eastern Minnesota!

In addition to Billy Balock, expect another transplants to show up from time to time at various IRA events. Montana transplant Shane Spurlock now calls Elk River, MN, (hmm, that sounds familiar) home and is focusing on a 2005 WISSOTA championship. Shane's plans also call for him to run as many IRA and World of Outlaws events as his schedule allows. What else would you expect from the son of WoO veteran Bill Spurlock?

Well, there are a few special releases upcoming soon involving teams, so keep an eye on the news as we get those out as soon as they come in. If you have news, feel free to send it to me at [carppix@arppix.com](mailto:carppix@arppix.com) as we start to gear up for 2005.

## Scraping the Wall



I have to laugh when "novice" race fans always come up to me and say, "This is a quiet time of the year for you, isn't it?" I simply smile at them and say, "No ... it's actually a busy time." Then I smile.

Typically, a lot of businesses have either finished up preparing their annual budget or are close to finishing it. At the same time, race teams are huddled in their garage around a space heater, working on their 2005 race cars. Racing is not even close to being a seasonal hobby anymore; it's a year-long hobby.

The off-season is always a unique time of the year in my eyes. It's a chance to get away from the track and sit in the recliner and watch racing on television. See, you can never get away from it.

For race track workers and promoters, this is the time of the year where they work on putting a great season together for the race fans and teams. The promoters or sales reps, or even the track owners themselves, are busy calling on businesses to find sponsors for their nights of racing. Not an easy task; in some parts of this great country of ours, racing still hasn't reached the level of mainstream sport, like baseball or football. Also, the economy is still making businesses watch their pocketbooks very carefully. Typically, the easiest sponsors to get are the ones who either enjoy racing or have some extra money to spend.

Which poses this question: What does a sponsor get out of sponsorship at a local race track? For some, this could be a great way to go after a target market. Also realize this: a lot of tracks are not going to attract national sponsors like the ones you see sponsor NASCAR races. I would suggest coming up with affordable packages so that smaller, more localized businesses can afford to get involved. What a great way for a small business to feel like a big dog for a night! Also, get that business involved in your advertising campaign - help them get their name out there, and they will do what they can to return the favor. Isn't there a famous quote of something like, "News travels fast around a small town"?

This can also be said for drivers looking for sponsors: don't go after the big blockbuster sponsor. Get what you can, and

make sure they get good exposure on your car.

We would all like to think we are on the same level as NASCAR, but the truth is we are not. Local tracks have an opportunity to create something that is more unique and entertaining than what you see on television. How many out there have seen a better four-cylinder heat race than a Cup race? How many have found more pleasure in watching hobby stocks race? How many have enjoyed watching a relative, friend or neighbor win a heat race?

This has always been my feeling about short tracks. When you have a sponsor, treat them the same as a Las Vegas casino would treat a high roller. Make them feel special. Work on creating divisions that each have their own character to them. Have a division or two that can be utilized as an inexpensive start-up division; keep it cost effective and yet safe.

And when I mean safe, enforce the latest safety measures, including an approved head-and-neck support device. Yeah, I know that some of you are saying, "Wait a second - now you are contradicting yourself." I may be, but at the same time I want that driver who doesn't have a lot of money to race to be sure that they can at least secure the correct safety devices so they aren't paying expensive medical bills for the rest of their lives. Safety does come at a price, but spend it on preventive measures rather than injury recovery expenses.

Finally, my biggest suggestion to track promoters. When you focus on the fans, realize who the fans are and cater to them. Do what you can to put a good show on the track. Have decent car counts to entertain them. Remember, the majority of your fans will probably range in the 18-45 age group. If you want to do a kids' club, that's great, but remember - a kids' club does not bring in the fans. Mom and Dad have to drive the kids to the track for you. Work on convincing Mom and Dad to come out and bring their kids along; don't count on the kids to bring the parents.

Race fans want to see good racing. They want to be entertained by what they see on the track. Once you get a good car count and great fan attendance, the sponsors will be calling you, because you have a great avenue for them to get their name to the people they want as customers.

No one likes to hear it when a track is in financial straits or when one closes. Every troubled track has its own laundry list of why these things happen; sometimes it boils down to having

## Kevin Ramsell

something simple and making it complicated, like spending money on something you don't need to make the track work, or simply upsetting the wrong people.

Short-track racing is supposed to be fun for everyone involved. While it is a business, it's also a form of entertainment. Today our competition to the younger audience is a little plastic box that has 10,000 songs, 15 video games and an instant messenger so they can chat with their friend online that lives a block away. If someone can figure out a way to get that younger generation outside, enjoy putting together a race car and master the art of friendly competition in a fair environment, short-track racing will grow beyond our generation.

Wouldn't it be cool if, for instance, we had intramural high school racing? Someone gives a high school an annual grant to build a hobby stock or a four-cylinder car, and we have weekly high school racing competition. They have their own set of rules with strict enforcement and a team of advisors and mentors from the racing business to show them how much fun it is to build a car, race it, and enjoy the spirit of friendly competition. And at the end of the night, they might be glad they were a part of something special, whether their car makes it to victory lane or not.

I know, I know, we would have to work over some liability and legal issues, so there goes that fantasy. But we do need to draw their interest.

I would encourage any race team, driver, race track and promoter to start mentoring. If someone shows the slightest interest, grab them and encourage them to expand their interest. Ten years ago, someone found out that I was interested and got me involved. I was able to participate in a capacity that was suited for me. I hardly got dirty, but I was able to do something to say I was a part of that team. I got to relish in a championship, and the best part was meeting people who helped me get to where I am today.

Once you are pulled into this sport, it's very hard to walk away from it. And wouldn't it be cool to say to yourself, like for example when you are standing on top of the hill at Jefferson Speedway, "I helped that person get to the success he or she is having on the track right now." Simply put, you at least need your part to keeping short-track racing going for another generation to enjoy.

## Anderson Joins Andretti Green Racing

INDIANAPOLIS, IN -- Veteran Indy-style racing team manager John Anderson has joined Andretti Green Racing as one of the team's two team managers.

Anderson, who will share responsibilities with George Klotz, will also serve as race strategist for the number 26 car driven by Dan Wheldon.

Anderson has spent the last two years as director of operations for the Champ Car World Series. Prior to joining the staff at Champ Car, Anderson spent two years at Team Green as a consultant and race strategist for driver Paul Tracy. The native of Australia is in his fourth decade of involvement in the motorsports industry. He began as a mechanic for a Formula 5000 team in Australia before coming to the United States in 1981. Anderson began working in Indy-style racing in 1984 as a mechanic for Forsythe Racing and then advanced to the level of team manager and crew chief at Mike Curb Motorsports in 1986.

He has also served as crew chief or team manager for Galles Racing, King Motorsports, A.J. Foyt Racing and Pac West Racing Group. Among the drivers he has worked with are Al Unser Jr., Roberto Guerrero, A.J. Foyt, Mauricio Gugelmin, Mark Blundell and Scott Dixon.

Wheldon won three races in 2004 and finished second in the IndyCar Series point standings.

## IRL Pro Series Rule Changes to Focus on Competition, Safety

INDIANAPOLIS, IN -- Rule changes for the 2005 Indy Racing League Menards Infiniti Pro Series season are designed to increase competition and improve already high safety standards.

Highlighting the rule changes is a modification to the scoring system. For the first time in the Series' four-year history, the winner of the pole position will receive one point in the championship and point standings. In addition, qualifying procedures have been expanded to incorporate road- and street-course competition, at which the driver with the fastest practice lap during the previous day's sessions will choose whether the qualification order proceeds from fastest practice driver to slowest, or from slowest to fastest. Each car will receive one timed lap of qualifying.

Other changes are designed to increase the level of safety at the race track. The speed limit on pit road will be dropped to 45 mph from 60 mph; only three crew members will be permitted over the wall during a pit stop; and no one will be allowed over the wall during a race, except during a pit stop. Also, teams will no longer be permitted to add or remove fuel from their cars in the garage area.

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**ARCA to Add Safety, Cost-Containment Measures for 2005**

TOLEDO, OH, November 22 -- With an eye on safety and cost-containment, the ARCA Re/Max Series prepares for its 53rd consecutive season of competition with several procedural and rules changes for the 2005 season.

Among the measures are a greater number of condensed race weekend schedules with post-qualifying impound procedures, an initiative to limit engine RPMs to 8,800, requiring that all exhaust exit the right side of the car, requiring roof flaps and strips as well as tethers on cars competing at events on tracks of all lengths, and an upgraded "Race Safe System" on-board caution light alert.

"Safety and cost control are constantly evolving, moving targets," said ARCA president Ron Drager. "We do our best to work with the teams, our safety and technical inspection staff and officials, high-performance equipment manufacturers and officials of other racing series to monitor what's being developed and used in competition. We also try to be receptive to suggestions from the teams, and the

changes we're making are a combined result of all that."

Condensing the length of time needed to inspect, practice, qualify and race takes a page from traditional short-track racing, where there is no practice after qualifying ("happy hour") and all activities are completed in hours, not days. ARCA events at tracks one mile and less in length have featured a single-day race format, and superspeedway races at Kentucky Speedway, Nashville Super-speedway and Gateway International Raceway have also been conducted with a single day of on-track activity, including a single practice session followed by qualifying and the race. Impounding cars after qualifying restricts teams from investing in manpower, parts, fluids and resources specific to qualifying, since the cars are raced with all the same components exactly as qualified. In most cases, the procedure can also save teams a day's expense of travel accommodations. At least 20 of the Series' 23 races in 2005 are expected to see abbreviated schedules.

The RPM limit is specifically designed to increase internal engine component life. Engine builders on the cutting edge of innovation continue to increase the RPMs an engine can produce for short runs, producing more power and speed at the expense of stress on engine parts, which reduces the life expectancy of the components significantly. Among the RPM control methods researched have been designating specified gear and transmission ratios as well as limiting engine RPMs through restrictions on sanctioning body-issued ignition boxes.

Rerouting the exhaust from exiting the left side of the car to the right directs much of the heat away from the fuel-filler inlet, thereby decreasing the potential for heat-induced fire. Roof flaps, wicker-bill roof strips and wheel, hood and deck lid tethers are already a requirement for ARCA races on tracks over one mile in length, but will now be required on short tracks as well. The roof aerodynamic pieces are designed to help keep the car's four tires on the

track in the event of a spin, while the tethers attach to components of the car which could become dislodged in an impact. The conformity of all cars to the same set of requirements also eliminates any potential competitive advantage to constructing a car without the designated parts.

The Race Safe System, which the Series has mandated since 2003, triggers a caution light on the dashboard of all cars simultaneously when the caution flag is displayed and the track caution lights are activated. Racing Electronics, ARCA's official two-way radio communication provider, administrated the Race Safe System prior to purchasing the company, which has improved the product's reliability and performance. Race Safe System changes for 2005 include implementing its own radio frequency, thereby eliminating possible interference from outside sources, as well as the addition of green indicator lights to indicate a full charge, longer battery life and lighter weight.

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Race Fan Guide****60th 'Night Before 500,'  
Speedfest Highlight  
'05 IRP Season**

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, Jan. 31 -- Indianapolis Raceway Park has announced its racing schedule for the 2005 season, and among the highlights are the 24th annual Kroger SpeedFest, the 51st annual U.S. Nationals, a special return of USAC's "Thursday Night Thunder" series, and the 60th annual "Night Before the 500" USAC Midget Series race on May 28.

The "Night Before the 500," long a crown jewel for IRP, has seen a resurgence in popularity over the past three seasons that is expected to continue for 2005.

Returning to IRP on the oval is a special "Thursday Night Thunder" event June 9 featuring the USAC Sprint Car Series. In the early 1990s "Thursday Night Thunder" was a staple on the IRP schedule.

Speedfest will feature three nights of racing on the IRP oval, during which the USAC Silver Crown Series, the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series and the NASCAR Busch Series will compete. Speedfest will take place August 4-6.

The U.S. Nationals is the largest and most prestigious drag race in the world, and will take place throughout Labor Day weekend, on August 31-September 5.

Many popular events are returning to both the IRP oval and the dragstrip, including the USAR Hooters Pro Cup Series, the American Speed Association, the Goodguys Hot Rod Nationals, the Super Chevy Show and the Indy Truck Bash.

New for 2005 drag racing schedule are the Steel Horse Stampede, motorcycle drag racing and the Diesel Hot Rod Nationals.

Tickets for the 2005 SpeedFest are currently in the renewal process, and sale to the general public will begin following the renewal process. Tickets for the U.S. Nationals have not started the renewal process.

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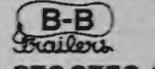
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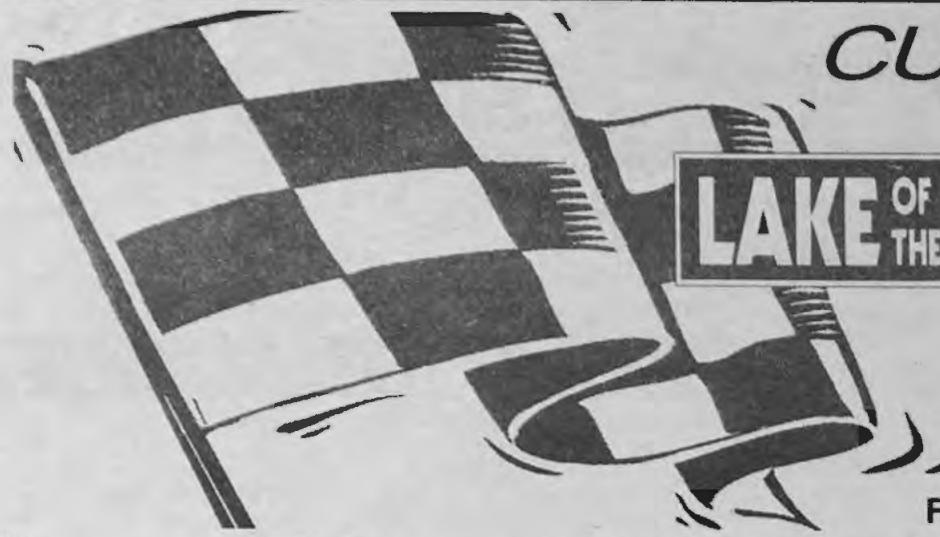
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As of Feb 4	Duane Rogers .....	74	David Pierce .....	31	Jeff Turner .....	36	Chase Neill .....	31	J.J. Yeley .....	63	Tom Hessert III .....	42	Steve Davis .....	45
MODIFIEDS	Don Pannel .....	72	B.J. Dulock .....	35	Bobby East .....	59	Bobby East .....	59	Josh Wise .....	39	Heather Davis .....	3	Heather Davis .....	3
National	Michael Goldie .....	69	John Melton .....	85	Steve Spoons .....	34	Jay Drake .....	58	Ron Gregory .....	36	USAC/CRA SPRINTS		USAC/CRA SPRINTS	
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Jesse Barnhill .....	84	Steven McCollough .....	60	Joe Phillips .....	70	Toby Miller .....	31	Aaron Fike .....	45	Steve Paden .....	31	Charles Davis, Jr. ....	109	
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Duane Rogers .....	74	Sonny Wahl .....	36	Bill Adams .....	64	Charlie Wilson .....	28	J.J. Yeley .....	51	Ron Gregory .....	36	Seth Wilson .....	83	
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Michael Goldie .....	69	Henry Witt, Jr. ....	39	Todd Jones .....	52	Jerry West .....	37	Jimmy Kite .....	42	J.R. Trimino .....	62	Damon Gardner .....	73	
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### from the Wisconsin Motorsports Charities Banquet

January 14 at Country Springs Hotel, Pewaukee, WI (Dave Drews photos)



Recipients of awards during the annual Wisconsin Motorsports Charities banquet, held in Pewaukee on January 14 (front row, l-r): Frank Kimmel, ARCA champion; Reed Sorenson, Alan Kulwicki Award; Russ Lake, chairman WMC; Sam Hornish, Jr., two-time IRL champion; Ralph Sheheen, motorsports commentator; (back row, l-r) Howie Lettow, Wisconsin Achievement Award; Terry Lingner, Ted Lake Dedication to Auto Racing Award; David Hobbs, co-master of ceremonies; Robbie Reiser, honorary chairman; and Arthur Diaz, Mid-Atlantic and Southeast Regional CCS champion.



Wisconsin Motorsports Charities banquet chairman Russ Lake presents George Leutermann from Ranch Community Services with a check for \$25,000 from proceeds from the event, bringing the 14-year total to \$380,000.

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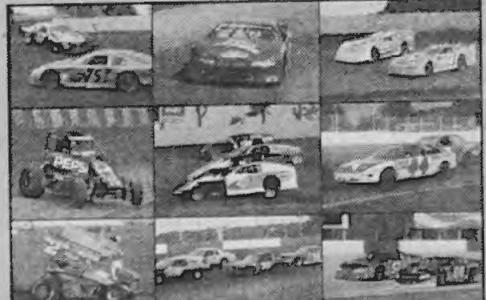
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### K'ville World Challenge Continues to Grow

KNOXVILLE, IA, Jan. 31 -- The Knoxville World Challenge for sprint cars continues to grow, as 43 Australians and ten Americans have qualified for Knoxville Raceway's Friday, August 12, international invitational by competing in the recent Grand Annual Sprintcar Classic at Premier Speedway's Sungold Stadium in Warrnambool, Victoria, Australia.

Amongst the qualifiers were Classic winner Kerry Madsen of Australia, runner-up Shane Stewart of Oklahoma and former World Challenge winners Donny Schatz of North Dakota, Max Dumesny of Australia, Travis Rilat of Texas, Daryn Pittman of Oklahoma, and Randy Hannagan of California.

The World Challenge is the Friday night finale of the Knoxville Nationals.

Other Americans qualifying at Warrnambool were Jason Johnson of Louisiana, Tim Kaeding of California, Brad Sweet of California, Brent Antill of Iowa, and Jimmy Sills of California. Among the Australians now eligible for the \$10,000-to-win World Challenge at Knoxville, in addition to Madsen and Dumesny, are Brooke Tatnell, Trevor Green, Garry Brazier, Troy Little and Robbie Farr.

Previously qualified drivers include Canadian Adam West, Americans Billy Alley and Dickie Gaines, and New Zealanders Stevie Walsh and Havard Daniels.

The next World Challenge international qualifier was scheduled for Saturday, February 12, at the Springs Speedway in Western Springs, New Zealand; however, the event has been cancelled by the venue's promoter due to noise-level restrictions. Thus, the April 29-30 sprint car events at Knoxville Raceway will now serve as the next qualifier, with the final one taking place on Wednesday, June 8, at the Budweiser Motorsports Park in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Both the Knoxville and Edmonton events will act as qualifiers for Australians, Canadians and New Zealanders.

### 'Texas Terry' Announces '05-'06 Schedule

CHARLOTTE, NC, January 11 -- NASCAR veteran Terry Labonte, who in October 2004 announced plans to drive partial schedules with Hendrick Motorsports in 2005 and '06, laid out his calendar for the upcoming Nextel Cup Series season.

Driving the Hendricks Motorsports number 44, the two-time Series champion will kick off the first leg of his "Shifting Gears - Lone Star Style" tour February 27 at California Speedway. In his 27th year of NASCAR competition, Labonte, 48, will compete at Bristol Motor Speedway on April 3, followed by the first of two Texas Motor Speedway appearances April 17. He will also enter a pair of races - the All-Star Challenge and the Memorial Day-weekend 600-miler - at Lowe's Motor Speedway in May.

The June 12 event at Pocono Raceway will open the second half of the ten-race slate, prior to dates at Chicagoland Speedway, Indianapolis Motor Speedway and Kansas Speedway. Labonte's 2005 season-finale will come November 6 at Texas.

Since joining Hendrick Motorsports in 1994, Labonte has posted 12 of his 22 career wins and bested teammate Jeff Gordon by 37 points to claim the 1996 Cup championship in one of the closest finishes in NASCAR history.

### New Divisions Added to Music City Line-Up

NASHVILLE, TN -- Excitement is already building around the all-new pure thunder stock division that will be making its debut this season at the Music City Motorplex, while the newly refined Hornets will also return. Both of these racing divisions will be a part of the Sunday "Family Fun Day" program and offer racing enthusiasts a cost-friendly method of racing.

The pure thunder stocks are open to any American-made stock passenger car; trucks and SUVs are not eligible, and Chevrolet-powered cars are limited to station wagons or sedans with a minimum wheelbase of 115 inches. Stock engines, suspension and drivetrains are mandatory, in an effort to keep the thunder stocks an affordable, entry-level division. The division is catching on fast, as several cars have already been built.

After a successful 2004 season, the Hornets will return to the Motorplex and add to the excitement of the Sunday schedule. Any four- or six-cylinder car with a maximum wheelbase of 103 inches and a completely stock body, interior, frame and suspension will be allowed to race.

### CRA, Super Lates to Run Six Events at Anderson

ANDERSON, IN, Jan. 25 -- Anderson Speedway has announced it will host six super late model events during the 2005 season.

The CRA Super Series will compete here on April 16 in a 125-lap event, on July 15-16 during the 39th annual Anderson 400, and on August 13. Anderson Speedway will also hold three other 50-lap super late model events, on May 7, June 11 and September 17.

Late model racing has been a fixture at Anderson Speedway for many years, with drivers such as Bob Fields, Vic Hells, Jim Cooper, Dennis Miles, Ray Fuller, Bull Baker and Brian Rieley enjoying success at the high-banked quarter-mile oval.

Anderson Speedway's super late model car specifications will be identical to the 2005 CRA Super Series rules. Speedway officials will publish a tire rule for the three super late model events at a later date.

For additional information on Anderson Speedway, call (765) 642-0206.